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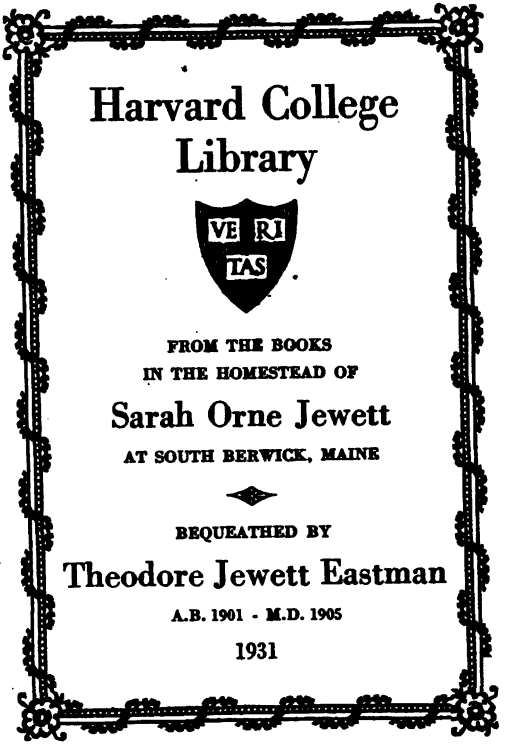

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JULIAN HAWTHORNE

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of East and West

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New York
The Review of Reviews Company
1907

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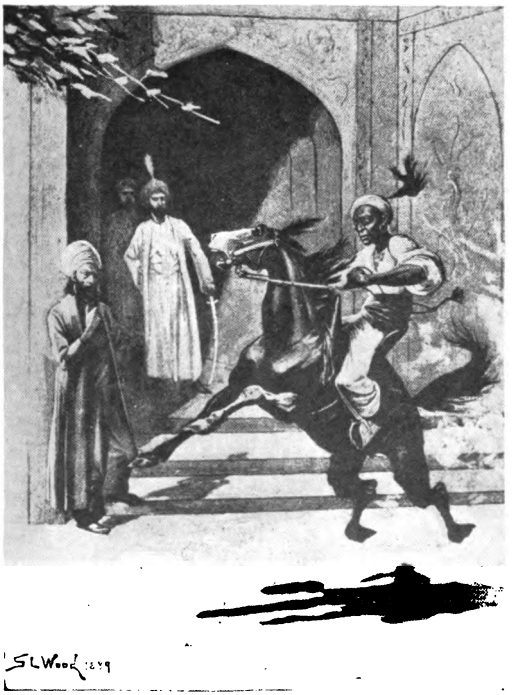

How the Second Sharper Knew the Horse's Pedigree

Drawing by S. L. Wood. To illustrate "The Craft of the Three Sharpers"

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TRUE STORIES OF MODERN MAGIC

A CONJURER'S CONFESSIONS
FRAUDULENT SPIRITUALISM UNVEILED

New York
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A Web of World-Old Oriental Tales

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Oriental Tales

From the *Japanese* of KIKUCHI JUN. From the *Chinese* of PU SUNG LING (17th Century). From the *Tibetan MSS.* called KAH-GYUR. From *Persian* sources. From the *Turkish* of AHMED IBN HEMDEM SHE KETK-HODA, called "Sohailee." From the *Arabian* BOOK OF A THOUSAND NIGHTS AND A NIGHT. From the *Sanskrit* of SOMADEVA (about 1070), as narrated in the "Katha Sarit Sagara," or "Ocean of Rivers of Stories."

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A Web of World-Old Oriental Tales

Introduction by Charles Johnston

British India Civil Service: Royal Asiatic Society

HUCKLEBERRY FINN insisted that Indiana is pink because it is so on the map. We have much the same view of Eastern lands. We think that Arabia is pink, that Egypt is green, that Persia is blue, that India is yellow. And we imagine them as ruled off from each other by sharply marked lines, which, whosoever crosses, promptly has his head cut off.

In reality, there are no such lines. The East is the East, and it is much the same in many things from Morocco to far Timor and the Spice Islands; the same gleam and glow, the same rainbow colors, the same stir and surge of bronzed men and veiled women. And that has been so for ages. Long before the days of Solomon, proud ships plowed the Eastern main, trading between the Red Sea coasts and distant India, bringing thence the gold and ivory, the apes and peacocks, and the algum trees which, even in the story of Solomon, bear Indian names. And wherever they went, the sailors of those sapphire seas carried with them the sailor's open-eyed curiosity, his love of adventure, his romance that blossomed in every port. And some dusk sweetheart in the Camphor Isles, or by the pearl banks of Sulu, or in that miraculous land where dwell the paradise birds, told him old tales of love and death and witchcraft; and in the long night watches on the homeward way, he told them over again to his shipmates. So the tales went to and fro, weaving the many-colored garment of fantasy.

It was so in Solomon's time. It was so before they built the Pyramids. It was so through all the long centuries that have since slipped by and fallen into Time's treasury. It is so to-day. There is but one vast treasure-house of Eastern lore, and from its miraculous riches every

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bard and rhymer, every recounter of things marvelous and glad and sad, has drawn to his heart's content since the days of Babylon—Babylon long ago. No one can say how old these stories are. They are primeval. Some of them are as old as man. Some of them go back to those days when kindly spirits walked the earth among mortals, wondering gently at the new creature, with his fancies and his whims, and now and then touching man's work to unravel some knot of fate or to bring an unexpected blessing to some simple, good person. Of these tales of fairyland and its ministering visitants there is a web all round the world, and every wise child should believe them until he grows old and hard and incredulous.

So with tales of mysteries and wonders, of crafty robbers, and quick-witted women who out-tricked them. No interest is more universal than that which listens wide-eyed to a tale of dark deeds and their subtle unraveling. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, that skilled knight who in quite recent years has enthralled the world with his tales of thrice-hidden mysteries, of invisible clews, of preternatural acumen, is but delving in a mine that was worked before they quarried for the Pyramids; he is but appealing once again to the world-old interest in the mystery tale that has held spellbound auditors through long centuries in every land lapped by the Seven Seas. The very word clew goes back to Ariadne, and that thread of hers that led Theseus safe through the Cretan labyrinth.

Take the story in this collection, "The Clever Thief" (page 169). As it stands here it comes from the Tibetan, from an ancient Buddhist book that goes back nearly a thousand years. But even then it was not new. Missionaries carried it thither from India in an odd corner of their bags, or in some chamber of the memory not filled with the riddles of being. Where did they get it? Who can say? It was old when Herodotus wandered through sunlit Egypt twenty-four centuries ago, gleaning tales from the priests of Amen and of Ptah. He tells it, point for point, as did those Buddhist missionaries, but lays it in the days of

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Rameses, nigh four thousand years ago. Everything is there—the cutting off of the head to elude detection, the tricks by which the relatives mourn over the headless trunk, the snare set for the thief and his outwitting it. And that same tale, like good merchandise, was carried both east and west. It found its way to India, over the vast Himalayas, to the gray roof of the world. It came with equal charm to the Mediterranean isles, up the Adriatic coasts, and as far as Venice, bride of the sea. There Ser Giovanni told it, transmogrifying Pharaoh of the Nile into a worshipful Doge, as he had already been made over into a Buddhist magnate, but in no way altering the motive, the suspense, the artfulness of the tale. What is this story then? Is it Venetian? Is it Pharaonic? Is it Greek? Is it Tibetan? It is all these, and perhaps something more, vastly older than them all. Its craft, mayhap, goes back to that primal serpent who, more subtle than all the beasts of the field, has ever inspired darkling feints and strategies. Stories whose motive is a subtly discerned clew are not less primordial. Take that tale of the treasure stolen from the foot of the medicinal nàgabala tree, where the thief was recognized because he used the roots of the tree to cure his headaches. The tale is here (page 178) taken from the Sanskrit, from that wonderful book of books called the "Ocean of the Rivers of Stories." And it was written in that book some eight centuries ago. Are we to say, then, that the tale is Indian? But there is a Persian tale with exactly the same motive; but there the tree is a jujube tree, and its root is used as a cure for asthma. And almost the same story is told in Italian by Sacchetti, who was born a few years after Dante died.

The most vivid of these tales of deduction are, perhaps, those which come to us through the Arabs, in their treasure store, "The Thousand and One Nights." The Arabs gleaned them from every land in southern Asia, and from most ancient Egypt, in those days when Moslem power overshadowed half the world. And then they retold them with a charm, a vivid freshness, a roguishness, and a dash

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of golden light through it all that make them the finest story tellers in the world. So in this volume we have taken many stories from the Arabs, to get that fine touch of genius in the telling which gives them their perfection.

Can we fix the dates of these Arabian stories? Only in a very general way. Some of them came from Cairo, some from Syria, some from the Euphrates and Tigris valleys, some from Persia and India and China; and they were gathered together, it would appear, in the century before Shakespeare was born, by some big-hearted, humorous fellow, among the great anonymous benefactors of mankind. But he made no claim of inventing them. If he had he would have been laughed at for his pains. For old men had heard them from their grandfathers, generation after generation, and the gray grandsires always began to tell them, saying: "So 'twas told to me when I was such a tiny child as thou art."

Many of these Arabic tales take us back to the golden time of good Harun al Raschid, who used to disguise himself of an evening and go forth in Bagdad's streets with his Wazir Ja'afar, descendant of the Barmecide fire worshipers, and Ishak the cupbearer and Masrur the Eunuch, the Sworder of his vengeance, going out by the postern gate and taking boat on the river Tigris. That was eleven hundred years ago and more, before the eventful Christmas day when Charlemagne was crowned emperor. A man of vigor and valor, of an alert and subtle spirit, worker of justice and protector of the weak was that same caliph; he has won the hearts of all story tellers and story hearers through a thousand years.

So these tales have surged to and fro, under many moons, in ceaseless tide since the world was young. Flying on the wings of night from one to another of those Eastern lands where the sun bronzes all faces that are not veiled, they have rested now in some Himalayan fastness, now in some pillared temple by the Ganges, now in a lane in Bagdad, now under the shadow of Turkish minarets. They are of no one land, but are part of the common riches of mankind.

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Oriental Mystery Stories

The Power of Eloquence

From the Japanese of Kikuchi Jun

UWOZUMI SEZAEMON, a rich inhabitant of the province of Etchigo, had a daughter of sixteen summers, by name Yuki-no, "the field of snow." Her marvelous beauty equaled her sparkling wit. She was a skillful musician, sang most charmingly, and excelled in making verses. The hearts of her parents exulted when they saw her perfections, and many were the suitors who demanded her hand in marriage. But Sezaemon, who deemed no youth a match for his fair girl, would not come to a decision, and ever put off the moment of separation, so that folks began to liken her to beautiful Komatchi, pledged to maidenhood.

Alas! how fickle is fortune! A grave sickness overtook the maiden; for many moons she lay pining on her couch, till at last she faded and sank to sleep, at the very moment when she should have burst forth in all the brightness of her beauty, like a sweet flower whose petals are strewn by the tempest. Her parents were in despair, and would not be comforted.

Yet needs must that they busy themselves about their daughter's burial. They brought her body in state to the monastery of Gokuraku, where the tombs of her ancestors were.

Some three months after the sad ceremony there was a knocking, long after midnight, at the monastery door. The porter peered through the wicket, and beheld a young man in rich vestments, whose twin swords with richly carved hilts of ivory declared him to be of noble birth. The porter hastened to open the door to him, and asked what he desired. The young man, announcing his titles

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and degree, said that he wished to see the master of the monastery, and slipped some pieces of money into the hands of the porter, who was delighted with this good fortune, and led him into the presence of the chief Bonze, prior of the monastery.

The young man seemed to be eighteen or nineteen years old; his eyes were bright, his hair black and shining, his face full of charm, noble and sweet.

He first saluted the worthy priest most honorably, kneeling, and advancing toward him on his knees, and then addressed him thus:

"I am the son of a noble of Kyoto; disaster overtook my family, bringing us to poverty, so that I had to leave Kyoto and migrate hither. And now I have a pressing desire to make known to you. This is the cause of my coming at so late an hour, though I am unknown to you. I know not how you will receive my prayer, for it concerns a matter of profound secrecy, and if ever it should come to be known——"

His voice broke, and he could not complete his sentence. Drawing from his purse five pieces of gold, he laid them on his fan, presenting it point forward to the reverend prior.

"Deign," he said, "to accept this modest present, which I offer, not to buy your favor, but only as a token of my humble obedience. You will make me happy, if you will have the kindness to employ it for the needs of worship."

The Bonze, who was fond of money, could not conceal his joy at receiving so rich a present. His face, which had been overcast and stern, burst into a beaming smile, and he said, with unctuous sweetness: "It is not common to find young people of your age animated by such a fervent religious spirit, for to-day few have any devotion. You are certain to receive pardon for all the sins of your past life, and to be received by our Lord Buddha into the abode of the blest, where you will enjoy eternal bliss and everlasting joy. But what is it you desire of me? Speak

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without fear, speak openly, for I keep all secrets that are intrusted to me."

But the young man still hesitated. He opened his mouth to speak, but his voice died away on his trembling lips. At last he seemed to make up his mind, and said: "So be it! Since it is useless to delay any longer, I will reveal to you the secret of my heart, whatever shame it may bring me. But I beg of you, make certain that none may remain within earshot, lest we be overheard."

"It is past midnight," said the Bonze. "Listen! everyone is already snoring. Who, then, could overhear what you have to tell me?"

Then the young man, his eyes downcast, and a blush of shame, which suffused his cheeks, but adding to his charms, began thus to speak:

"One day, a year ago, when I had gone into the country to admire the pretty flowers of sweet spring time, I met an adorable maiden, whose beauty put even the flowers to shame. My eyes were dazzled, my heart was perturbed. I followed her footsteps at a distance, and learned from the maid servant who accompanied her, walking a few paces behind her, that she was Uwozumi's daughter. For that moment, I was so deeply in love with her that I could think of naught else from morn till eve; and every night I dreamed of her ravishing beauty. Unable to withstand the force of my passion, I employed all possible means to win over the servant maid, and after difficulties without number I at last was able to declare my burning love to her whose radiant image possessed my heart. Mutual trust sprang up between us, and we swore to love each other to the end of our days.

"Alas! Heaven mocked at our design! What is more inconstant than human life? It is compared to the dew of the morning, but the dew ever lasts a certain space. Farewell, my beloved, farewell for ay. The door of death opened for thee in the flower of thy springtide. Can it be true, or is it but an evil dream? But why give way to my sorrows before you, reverend sir? She whom I

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loved so desperately is no more; nor can aught console me for my irremediable loss. As the days flit by my sorrow increases; naught in life attracts me; I long only for death. I would fain join in the other world her who has all my love. My own desire in this world is to open her grave, once more to embrace her upon this earth. O venerable priest, have pity on my grief! Grant me this last request, after which death will seem to me infinitely sweeter than life."

Greatly perturbed by so strange a request, the Bonze tried to console the youth, and to ween him from his plan. But the despairing young man's plan seemed only the more firmly fixed in his heart. "I know well," he said, "that a grave cannot be opened without the magistrate's order duly sealed; I know that you will oppose reasons to my entreaties; but my determination is only the firmer, and my grief is stronger than the whole world. Little do I reck of the heavy punishment that may overtake me.

"If you finally refuse me this last wish which I have revealed to you—well, my resolution is taken. I shall die on the spot!" And seizing his dagger, he was about to plunge it in his throat. The priest in terror stopped him, and consented to his request, but first he made him swear an oath. The young man drew a little blood from his finger to seal the bond, and promised to reveal nothing.

The girl's tomb was on the hillside, behind the monastery. The Bonze led his strange visitor thither. The hour was very late; there was a dampness in the air that bedewed their faces; a light breeze stirred through the darkness. In silence they went forward. Soon the tombs in regular rows began to show through the veil of mist, and the Bonze stopped. Pointing to a newly made grave he said "It is hers."

"At last!" cried the young man, attaining his desire, and, seizing the gravestone, he raised it from the tomb without visible effort. Then he opened the coffin, and rained kisses on the lifeless form of the maiden. The

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Bonze withdrew in grief and horror, and watched his strange visitor from afar.

The sorrow-stricken youth, altogether given up to his grief and his love, remained there, uttering bitter complaints and filled with a preternatural joy, which was terrible and incomprehensible. A half hour passed thus, and still he could not tear himself away from the lifeless form of his beloved. At last he laid the sad vestiges of his charmer once more in the tomb, arranging them with tender care, covering them with earth, and putting back the tombstone as before. Thereafter he rejoined the priest, and poured out to him his unbounded gratitude.

A year after the death of Yuki-no, "the field of snow," the whole family had come together in Uwozumi's house, for the anniversary service to her spirit. Her father and mother wept at the memory of the happy days of their beloved child; they beheld her once more in memory; charming, frank, delighting them with her countless fancies and pretty jests, amusing herself by weaving flower wreaths for her brow, singing sweet ditties, and dancing lightly with her companions. They laid on the family altar all the little things that she had loved best. And meanwhile the Bonzes repeated their prayers, and the whole family, ranged in a circle around them, shed tears.

Just as the sun was setting behind the mountain, a pilgrim Bonze presented himself at the door, ringing his little beli and uttering prayers. They took him in, offering him hospitality for the night, and set pure food before him. After a short time, he addressed the master of the house and his wife, saying: "I have come from afar solely in order to communicate to you something of great moment concerning your daughter. I beg you to send to a distance all your servants, so that I may speak freely to you, after which I shall not regret all the pain and weariness of my coming." They led him immediately to a remote apartment, and begged him to begin at once what he had to tell, because it was already late.

The Bonze drew himself together, took his rosary in both

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hands and passed it between his fingers, then several times repeating the invocation to Amida Buddha, he began as follows:

"While I was traveling through the province of Etchigo, I ascended Mount Tateyama, and passed through a valley called Jigoku Dani. Not a living creature was in sight; not a hut was visible that could serve as a shelter. The sun had already set, darkness had begun to envelope the earth, and I was obliged to take shelter under the branches of an ancient tree. The wind whistled, and the cold, damp air pierced me to the bone, so that my eyelids, though heavy with sleep, refused to close. The night descended in thick darkness. All at once a slender flame, half reddish, half bluish, passed flickering before my eyes, now growing dim, now glowing brightly, now fading and then lighting up again; in a word, something mysterious, strange, indefinable, like everything that comes from the other world. At the same time I heard what seemed to be a plaintive voice approaching me. It was in vain that I lent all my attention, for I could distinguish nothing clearly. I thought that I must be the sport of some illusion, such as the fox witches and badger wizards impose on human beings. Then at last I went to sleep, my head leaning on my arm for a pillow. But while I slept I saw arise before me the specter of a young girl, who might have been about sixteen. Her pale, haggard face peered through her long black hair, which fell in disorder to the ground. Red blood flowed from a wound in her body and stained her white raiment. At last she began to speak to me in trembling tones, giving me three objects which she held in her hands: 'Sadly taking my own life,' she said, 'at the moment when my youth was about to burst into bloom, and when I should have been a joy to my parents' hearts, I left them in inconsolable sorrow. All my regrets have not been enough to expiate this crime, and I am now condemned to suffer night and day in a lake of blood. But I have been told that I may be set free, and may enter the abodes of the blessed, if some one will make an offering for my soul of a thousand copies of

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the holy texts, and will bury on a holy mountain or in some sacred stream these three objects which I give to you. If this be not done, my soul will return to the earth, to be imprisoned in the body of some animal, and I shall never regain a human form. Ah! how happy would I be if I could change my wretched state for the happiness of eternal paradise. Therefore I beg you to journey to my native province, and to tell to my parents all that I have said to you.'

"Hardly had she uttered these words when her image disappeared like a wreath of mist which vanishes away in the sky. Only the murmur of a nearby spring broke the silence of that solitude. I noted it then, hearing it distinctly. I was awake, lying stretched at the root of the tree where I had lain down to rest. I had awakened indeed from a dream, but how could I explain this wonder? I really held in my hands the three objects which the specter had given to me! I lighted a fire of withered leaves, and examined them in the glow of the flame. They were a little bag filled with sacred objects, a linen sleeve, and a cord tied round a few locks of hair, the first cut from a baby's head. They were wrapped together in a piece of paper, on which was written her name, her abode, and the day of her birth. Here are the three objects!" said the Bonze, and ceased speaking.

The father and mother examined them attentively, and, to their great astonishment, recognized the inscription which they themselves had traced and placed in the tomb of their beloved. Unable to check their feelings, they burst into sobs, and knew not what to do or say. Finally wiping away the tears which trickled over his cheeks, Uwozumi said:

"To-day is the very anniversary of the death of our dear child, and I cannot for a moment doubt that she came to you to implore your protection, to save her from the place of punishment. We pray you, therefore, venerable priest, to visit for her all the holy places of the west, and to bury these three objects, as she instructed you. As for the thou-

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sand copies of the holy texts, we will pay you for them twice, four times their value. Have pity on our tears, and grant us what we beg of you." Then they offered five hundred gold pieces to the pilgrim Bonze, as the price of the holy texts, and a hundred more for the cost of his journey.

But the Bonze shook his head, and replied: "We Bonze pilgrims pass our lives in traveling from place to place. What use, then, would money be to me? Our home is in every mountain, every river, every place where our footsteps rest." Saying this, he rose and made ready to take leave of his sorrow-stricken hosts. But they held him by the sleeve, and begged him to accept their money. Resisting until they forced him to comply, he at last accepted it, and said, as he departed: "Remember that, despite my age, despite the weariness of my long journey, I consent to do what you demand, in favor of your daughter and all your family."

"Oh, venerable saint!" they cried, falling down before him, their hands joined in entreaty. All the family accompanied him far on his way, and at last the Bonze departed, his pilgrim's staff in his hands.

The bystanders watched him depart, and disappear gradually from view, and even after he was out of sight their eyes remained fixed on the spot where he had disappeared, and they thought they still could see him, so deeply was his image graven on their minds.

After he had traveled seven or eight leagues, the Bonze plunged into a forest, and directed his steps toward an old ruined temple, which was in the depths of the forest. At the sound of his steps the door opened, and a young man ran to meet him.

The Bonze pulled off his wig and false beard, and showed his real form, young and vigorous. The two looked at each other and exchanged a smile. "Well played!" cried the young man. "It could not have been better planned," replied the other. "Now to Niigata to taste the sweets of life." So dividing their plunder, they set out. The false

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Bonze was the young man who had visited Yuki-no's tomb, whence he had taken the three objects which served to confirm his story.

The Dishonest Goldsmith and the Ingenious Painter

From the Turkish

IT is narrated by a person of veracity that once in the land of Adjem (Persia) a master goldsmith and a painter of talent for a time formed an association together, and lived on terms of brotherly intimacy. After this, being disposed to travel, they entered into a covenant to remain faithful to each other, and not to go one step beyond their association—that one should not act without the consent of the other, nor in any manner be treacherous to the other's interests.

Having made this agreement, they set out upon their journey. Their means being rather limited, on coming to a great convent, they put up there as guests. The monks of that convent, being pleased with them, showed them respect and tokens of esteem. They, particularly the painter, covered the walls of the convent with curious paintings; and the monks paid him much attention, and begged them to remain awhile with them. Having assented to this, they spent some time in the convent; and the monks placed so much confidence in them as to disclose to them the places containing the gold and silver idols of the convent. So one day they collected all these idols, and at night they made their escape with them. On reaching a city in a country of Islamites, they took up their abode there; when, according to their agreement, they put the gold and silver into a box, and spent only as much of it as their necessities required.

It so happened that the goldsmith married a parson's daughter, and the expenses of the association were thus

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increased. In the course of time the wife bore her husband two children; and one day, when the other was absent, the goldsmith opened the box containing the treasures, and, stealing away one half of the gold and silver, carried it to his own dwelling. On the painter's return he remarked that the box had been opened, and a portion of the contents taken out. When he questioned the goldsmith about it, the latter said that he had not touched it, and denied the theft.

Now the painter was a cunning fellow, and he immediately saw that the matter required good management. In the vicinity of their residence lived a huntsman, to whom he applied to procure him two bear cubs, for which he promised to pay him handsomely. The hunter consenting, he was soon furnished with the cubs, which the painter took and tamed. There was in that city also a carpenter; and, going to his shop, he bought of him the figure of a man made out of wood, and returned home. He then painted the figure, so that it was quite impossible to tell it from the goldsmith. This he put in a place by itself; and when the bear cubs were to be fed, he always had it done from the hand of the figure, until they became in time so accustomed to the sight of it as to treat it like their father or mother.

One day the painter invited the goldsmith to his house; and he accordingly came, bringing his two young sons with him. He treated them hospitably, and they passed the night there. On the following day he put the sons of the goldsmith in a secret part of his house; and when the father asked permission to take his leave he inquired for his sons. The painter replied, "An occurrence has happened which may serve as an example to others; I am really ashamed to relate it to you." "What is it?" asked the goldsmith with surprise. The painter added, "Whilst your sons were at play, and running about, they both became suddenly metamorphosed into the form of two bear cubs; and the affliction which has befallen these two innocent children must have been sent on account of some

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great sin." The goldsmith became excessively grieved. "What does this mean?" exclaimed he; "and why have you done this to my sons?" They quarreled, and finally both went before the cadi of the place. The cadi and his associates were greatly surprised at the strangeness of the case. "What can this mean?" exclaimed they all. "Never has such a thing happened before since the coming of Mohammed. What are the evidences of this remarkable occurrence?" I am quite as much astonished at it as yourselves," answered the painter; "but if you will allow me, I will bring the two metamorphosed children into your presence. The case will then be clear, and we will see whether or not they recognize their father."

The cadi and his company at once agreed to have the cubs brought before them. "Let us see," said they, "and judge for ourselves." The painter had cunningly kept the cubs hungry from the preceding night; and he now brought them from his house to the Mehkemeh of the judge, and placed them opposite the goldsmith. The cubs, as soon as they saw the latter, supposing him to be the same figure which the painter had made, rushed toward him, licked his feet, and began caressing him. The cadi and those with him were much affected at the sight, and exclaimed that if the cubs had not recognized their father in the goldsmith, they certainly would not act as they did. The goldsmith was bewildered between doubt and conviction; and so taking the two cubs with him, he returned to the house of the painter, where he begged pardon for his fault, and avowed it. He also returned the gold and silver effects which he had stolen from the box, and placed them all before the painter; at the same time he acknowledged his fault, and repented of what he had done. He likewise begged that the painter would pray to God to restore his sons to man's form again. The painter now led away the cubs, and putting them into the same house in which he had confined the goldsmith's children, he sat up all the following night apparently engaged in prayer. Early the next morning he went for the boys, and taking them by

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the hand, brought them to their father, exclaiming, "God be praised! our prayers have been accepted"; and delivered them up to their parent. The goldsmith was very much rejoiced, and offered many thanks to the painter, after which he carried his sons home.

Now news of this occurrence became spread about in the city, and it was told how the two sons of the goldsmith, after becoming metamorphosed, were again restored to human shape. Upon this the cadi had the painter cited before him, and required him to relate the truth about the matter. The painter informed him that such and such a compact had been made between himself and the goldsmith; that the latter had acted so and so toward him, but that he was unable to prove the charge. "So I got up a ruse," said he, "to make him acknowledge the theft of the gold and silver, and succeeded by my skill in the art of painting." "Barik Allah!" exclaimed all those who heard the recital; "a person's talents should be such as these." They added also many compliments and praises to the painter on the ingenuity of his thought, and his success in laying so wise a plan.

The Craft of the Three Sharpers

From the Arabic

THERE were in time of yore three Sharpers who were wont every day in early morning to prowl forth and to prey, rummaging among the mounds which outlay the city. Therein each would find a silver bit of five parahs or its equivalent, after which the trio would foregather and buy whatso sufficed them for supper: they would also expend two half-dirhams upon Bast, which is Bhang (Hashish), and purchase a waxen taper with the other silver bit. They had hired a cell in the flank of a Wakalah, a caravansary without the walls, where they could sit at ease to solace

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themselves and eat their Hashish after lighting the candle, and enjoy their intoxication and consequent merriment till the noon o' night. Then they would sleep, again awaking at day-dawn when they would arise and seek for spoil, according to their custom, and ransack the heaps where at times they would hit upon a silvering of five dirhams and at other times a piece of four; and at eventide they would meet to spend together the dark hours, and they would expend everything they came by every day. For a length of time they pursued this path until, one day of the days, they made for the mounds as was their wont and went round searching the heaps from morning to evening without finding even a half-parah; wherefore they were troubled and they went away and nighted in their cell without meat or drink. When the next day broke they arose and repaired for booty, changing the places wherein they were wont to forage; but none of them found aught; and their breasts were straitened for lack of a find of dirhams wherewith to buy them supper. This lasted for three full-told and following days until hunger waxed hard upon them and vexation; so they said one to other, "Go we to the Sultan and let us serve him with a sleight, and each of us three shall claim to be a past master of some craft: haply Allah Almighty may incline his heart usward and he may largesse us with something to expend upon our necessities." Accordingly all three agreed to do on this wise and they sought the Sultan whom they found in the palace-garden. They asked leave to go in to him, but the Chamberlains refused admission: so they stood afar off unable to approach the presence. Then quoth they one to other, "'Twere better we fall to and each smite his comrade and cry aloud and make a clamor, and as soon as he shall hear us he will send to summon us." Accordingly they jostled one another and each took to frapping his fellow, making the while loud outcries. The Sultan hearing this turmoil said, "Bring me yonder wights"; and the Chamberlains and Eunuchs ran out to them and seized them and set them between the hands of the Sovereign. As soon as they stood in the presence he asked them, "What be the

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cause of your wrath one against other?" They answered, "O King of the Age, we are past masters of crafts, each of us weeting an especial art." Quoth the Sultan, "What be your crafts?" and quoth one of the trio, "O our Lord, as for my art I am a jeweler by trade." The King exclaimed, "Passing strange! a sharper and a jeweler: this is a wondrous matter." And he questioned the second Sharper saying, "And thou, the other, what may be thy craft?" He answered, "I am a genealogist of the horse-kind." So the King glanced at him in surprise and said to himself, "A sharper, yet he claimeth an astounding knowledge!" Then he left him and put the same question to the third who said to him, "O King of the Age, verily my art is more wondrous and marvelous than aught thou hast heard from these twain: their craft is easy, but mine is such that none save I can discover the right direction thereto or know the first of it from the last of it." The Sultan inquired of him, "And what be thy craft?" Whereto he replied, "My craft is the genealogy of the sons of Adam." Hearing these words the Sovereign wondered with extreme wonderment and said in himself, "Verily He informeth with His secrets the humblest of His creatures! Assuredly these men, an they speak truth in all they say and it prove soothfast, are fit for naught except kingship. But I will keep them by me until the occurrence of some nice contingency wherein I may test them; then, if they approve themselves good men and trustworthy of word, I will leave them on life; but if their speech be lying I will do them die." Upon this he set apart for them apartments and rationed them with three cakes of bread and a dish of roast meat and set over them his sentinels dreading lest they fly. This case continued for a while till behold, there came to the Sultan from the land of 'Ajam a present of rarities, among which were two gems whereof one was clear of water and the other was clouded of color. The Sultan hent them in hand for a time and fell to considering them straitly for the space of an hour; after which he called to mind the first of the three Sharpers, the self-styled jeweler, and cried,

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"Bring me the jeweler-man." Accordingly they went and brought him and set him before the Sovereign who asked him, "O man, art thou a lapidary?" And when the Sharper answered "Yes" he gave him the clear-watered stone, saying, "What may be the price of this gem?" Then the Sharper took the jewel in hand and turned it rightward and leftward and considered the outside and pried into the inside; after which he said to the Sultan, "O my lord, verily this gem containeth a worm bred within the heart thereof." Now when the King heard these words he waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and commanded the man's head to be stricken off, saying, "This jewel is clear of color and free of flaw or other default; yet thou chargest it falsely with containing a worm!" Then he summoned the Linkman who laid hands on the Sharper and pinioned his elbows and trussed up his legs like a camel's and was about to smite his neck when behold, the Wazir entered the presence and, seeing the Sovereign in high dudgeon and the Sharper under the scimiter, asked what was to do. The Sultan related to him what had happened, when he drew near to him and said, "O my lord, act not after this fashion! An thou determine upon the killing of yonder man, first break the gem and, if thou find therein a worm, thou wilt know the wight's word to have been veridical; but an thou find it sound then strike off his head." "Right is thy rede," quoth the King: then he took in hand the gem and smote it with his mace and when it brake behold, he found therein the worm amiddlemost thereof. So he marveled at the sight and asked the man, "What proved to thee that it harbored a worm?" "The sharpness of my sight," answered the Sharper. Then the Sultan pardoned him and, admiring his power of vision, addressed his attendants saying, "Bear him back to his comrades and ration him with a dish of roast meat and two cakes of bread."[1] And they did as he bade them. After some time, on a day of the days, there came to the King the tribute of 'Ajam-land accompanied with presents, among which was a colt whose robe black as night showed one shade in the sun and another in the shadow. When the ani-

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mal was displayed to the Sultan he fell in love with it and set apart for it a stall and solaced himself at all times by gazing at it, and was wholly occupied with it and sang its praises till they filled the whole country side. Presently he remembered the Sharper who claimed to be a genealogist of the horse-kind and bade him be summoned. So they fared forth and brought him and set him between the hands of the Sovereign who said to him, "Art thou he who knoweth the breed and descent of horses?" "Yea verily," said the man. Then cried the King, "By the truth of Him who set me upon the necks of His servants and who sayeth to a thing 'Be' and it becometh, an I find aught of error or confusion in thy words, I will strike off thy head." "Hearkening and obedience," quoth the Sharper. Then they led him to the colt that he might consider its genealogy. He called aloud to the groom, and when they brought him he bade the man back the colt for his inspection. So he mounted the animal and made it pace to the right and to the left, causing it now to prance and curvet and then to step leisurely, while the connoisseur looked on and after a time quoth he to the groom, "'Tis enough!" Then he went in to the presence and stood between the hands of the King who inquired, "What hast thou seen in the colt, O Kashmar?" Replied the Sharper, "By Allah, O King of the Age, this colt is of pure and noble blood on the side of the sire: its action is excellent and all its qualities are praiseworthy save one; and but for this one it had been perfect in blood and breed nor had there been on earth's face its fellow in horseflesh. But its blemish remaineth a secret." The Sultan asked, "And what is the quality which thou blamest?" and the Sharper answered, "Its sire was noble, but its dam was of other strain: she it was that brought the blemish and if thou, O my lord, allow me I will notify it to thee." "'Tis well, and needs must thou declare it," quoth the Sultan. Then said the Sharper, "Its dam is a buffalo-cow." When the King heard these words he was wroth with wrath exceeding and he bade the Linkman take the Sharper and behead him, crying, "O dog! O accursed!

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How can a buffalo-cow bear a horse?" The Sharper replied, "O my lord, the Linkman is in the presence; but send and fetch him who brought thee the colt and of him make inquiry. If my words prove true and rightly placed, my skill shall be stablished; but an they be lies let my head pay forfeit for my tongue. Here standeth the Linkman and I am between thy hands: thou hast but to bid him strike off my head!" Thereupon the King sent for the owner and breeder of the colt and they brought him to the presence. And the Sultan asked him saying, "Tell me the truth anent the blood of this colt. Didst thou buy it or breed it so that it was a rearling of thy homestead?" Said he, "By Allah, O King of the Age, I will speak naught which is not sooth, for indeed there hangeth by this colt the strangest story: were it graven with graver-needles upon the eye-corners it had been a warning to whoso would be warned. And this it is. I had a stallion of purest strain whose sire was of the steeds of the sea; and he was stabled in a stall apart for fear of the evil eye, his service being intrusted to trusty servants. But one day in springtide the Syce took the horse into the open and allowed him to mate with a buffalo-cow. She conceived by him and when her days were completed and her throwing-time came she suffered sore pains and bare yonder colt. And all who have seen it or have heard of it were astounded," said he, presently adding, "By Allah, O King of the Age, had its dam been of the mare-kind the colt would have had no equal on earth's surface or aught approaching it." Hereat the Sultan took thought and marveled; then, summoning the Sharper he said to him when present, "O man, thy speech is true and thou art indeed a genealogist in horseflesh and thou wottest it well. But I would know what proved to thee that the dam of this colt was a buffalo-cow?" Said he, "O King, my proof thereof was palpable nor can it be concealed from any wight of right wits and intelligence and special knowledge; for the horse's hoof is round while the hooves of buffaloes are elongated and duck-shaped, and hereby I kenned that this colt was a jumart, the issue of a cow-buffalo." The Sultan was

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pleased with his words and said, "Ration him with a plate of roast meat and two cakes of bread"; and they did as they were bidden. Now for a length of time the third Sharper was forgotten till one day the Sultan bethought him of the man who could explain the genealogy of Adam's sons. So he bade fetch him and when they brought him into the presence he said, "Thou art he that knowest the caste and descent of men and women?" and the other said, "Yes." Then he commanded the Eunuchs take him to his wife and place him before her and cause him declare her genealogy. So they led him in and set him standing in her presence, and the Sharper considered her for a while, looking from right to left; then he fared forth to the Sultan who asked him, "What hast thou seen in the Queen?" Answered he, "O my lord, I saw a somewhat adorned with loveliness and beauty and perfect grace, with fair stature of symmetrical trace and with modesty and fine manners and skillful case; and she is one in whom all good qualities appear on every side, nor is aught of accomplishments or knowledge concealed from her, and haply in her center all desirable attributes. Natheless, O King of the Age, there is a curious point that dishonoreth her, from the which were she free none would outshine her of all the women of her generation." Now when the Sultan heard the words of the Sharper, he sprang hastily to his feet and clapping hand upon hilt bared his brand and fell upon the man, purposing to slay him; but the Chamberlains and the Eunuchs prevented him saying, "O our lord, kill him not until his falsehood or his fact shall have been made manifest to thee." The Sultan said to him, "What then appeared to thee in my Queen?" "She is ferly fair," said the man, "but her mother is a dancing-girl, a gypsy." The fury of the King increased hereat and he sent to summon the inmates of his Harem and cried to his father-in-law, "Unless thou speak me sooth concerning thy daughter and her descent and her mother I"— He replied, "By Allah, O King of the Age, naught saveth a man save soothfastness! Her mother indeed was a Ghaziyah: in past time a party of the tribe was

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passing by my abode when a young maid strayed from her fellows and was lost. They asked no questions concerning her; so I lodged her and bred her in my homestead till she grew up to be a great girl and the fairest of her time. My heart would not brook her wiving with any other; so I wedded her and she bare me this daughter whom thou, O King, hast espoused." When the Sultan heard these words the flame in his heart was quenched and he wondered at the subtlety of the Sharper man; so he summoned him and asked him saying, "O wily one, tell me what certified to thee that my Queen had a dancing-girl, a gypsy, to mother?" He answered, "O King of the Age, verily the Ghaziyah race hath eye-balls intensely black and bushy brows, whereas other women than the Ghaziyah have the reverse of this." On such wise the King was convinced of the man's skill and he cried, "Ration him with a dish of roast meat and two scones." They did as he bade and the three Sharpers tarried with the Sultan a long time till one day when the King said to himself, "Verily these three men have by their skill solved every question of genealogy which I proposed to them: first the jeweler proved his perfect knowledge of gems; secondly the genealogist of the horse-kind showed himself as skillful, and the same was the case with the genealogist of mankind, for he discovered the origin of my Queen and the truth of his words appeared from all quarters. Now 'tis my desire that he do the same with me that I also may know my provenance." Accordingly they set the man between his hands and he said to him, "O fellow, hast thou the power to tell me mine origin?" Said the Sharper, "Yes, O my lord, I can trace thy descent, but I will so do only upon a condition; to wit, that thou promise me safety after what I shall have told thee; for the saw saith, 'Whilst Sultan sitteth on throne 'ware his despite, inasmuch as none may be contumacious when he saith 'Smite.'" Thereupon the Sultan told him, "Thou hast a promise of immunity, a promise which shall never be falsed." And the man said, "O King of the Age, when as I acquaint thee with thy root and branch, let it be between

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us twain lest these present hear us." "Wherefore O man?" asked the Sultan, and the Sharper answered, "O my lord, Allah of Allmight hath among His names 'The Veiler'"; wherefore the King bade his Chamberlains and Eunuchs retire so that none remained in the place save those two. Then the Sharper came forward and said, "O my lord, thou art not the son of a king." As soon as the King heard these words his case changed and his color waxed wan and his limbs fell loose: he foamed at the mouth; he lost hearing and sight; he became as one drunken without wine and he fell fainting to the ground. After a while he recovered and said to the Sharper, "Now by the truth of Him who hath set me upon the necks of His servants, and thy words be veridical and I ascertain their sooth by proof positive, I will assuredly abdicate my Kingdom and resign my realm to thee, because none deserveth it save thou and it becometh us least of all and every. But an I find thy speech lying I will slay thee. He replied, "Hearing and obeying"; and the Sovereign, rising up without stay or delay, went inside to his mother with grip on glaive, and said to her, "By the truth of Him who uplifted the sky above the earth, an thou answer me not with the whole truth in whatso I ask thee, I will cut thee to little bits with this blade." She inquired, "What dost thou want with me?" and he replied, "Whose son am I, and what may be my descent?" She rejoined, "Although falsehood be an excuse, fact and truth are superior and more saving. Thou art indeed the very son of a cook. The Sultan that was before thee took me to wife but we had no issue; and he would mourn and groan from the core of his heart for that he had no seed, nor girl nor boy; neither could he enjoy aught of sweet food or sleep. Now it chanced that the wife of the Kitchener bare him a boy, and I prevailed upon her to keep the birth secret; and my women brought the child to me, and spread abroad that at last an heir was come. Now at that time the Sultan was hunting and birding and enjoying himself about the gardens; and when the bearer of good news went to him and announced the birth of a man-child he hurried back to me

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and forthright bade them decorate the capital and he found the report true; so the city adorned itself for forty days in honor of its King. Such is my case and my tale." Thereupon the King went forth from her to the Sharper and bade him doff his dress, and when this had been done he doffed his own raiment and habited the man in royal gear and hooded him with the Taylasan and asked him saying, "What proof hast thou of my being base born?" The Sharper answered, "O my lord, my proof was thy bidding our being rationed, after showing the perfection of our skill, with a dish of roast meat and two scones of bread; whereby I knew thee to be of cook's breed, for the Kings be wont in such case to make presents of money and valuables, not of meat and bread as thou didst, and this evidenced thee to be no king's son, but a cook's son." He replied, "Sooth thou sayest," and then robed him with the rest of his robes including the Kalansuwah or royal head-dress under the hood, and seating him upon the throne of his estate, went forth from him after abandoning all his women to him and assumed the garb of a Darwaysh who wandereth about the world and formally abdicated his dominion to his successor. But when the Sharper-king saw himself in this condition, he reflected and said to himself, "Summon thy whilom comrades and see whether they recognize thee or not." So he caused them be set before him and conversed with them; then, perceiving that none knew him he gifted them and sent them to gang their gait. And he ruled his realm and bade and forbade and gave and took away and was gracious and generous to each and every of his lieges; so that the people of that region who were his subjects blessed him and prayed for him.

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The Cheerful Workman

From the Arabic

IT is mentioned in the celebrated Arabic work entitled the "Mirror of the Age," that one of the caliphs of the house of Abbass, Mutâsid Billah, besides being a very brave and courageous person, was also possessed of keen observation, and the faculty of knowing men by their physiognomy. One day as he was inspecting the erection of a palace on the banks of the Tigris, which he was wont to do once a week, and encourage the builders with presents and other acts of favor, he observed that each of the men employed carrying stones to the edifice bore but one at a time, and that with great gravity and slowness. Among them, however, he perceived one, with black hands and dark complexion, who invariably lifted two at a time, put them on his back, and with evident joy and elasticity carried them from the wharf to the masons. On seeing this, the caliph pointed him out to Hussian, one of his attendants, and asked the cause of this man's unnatural gayety. The attendant answered that the caliph was more competent to form an opinion of the case than himself. The caliph then added that the man was probably possessed of a large sum of money, and was therefore happy from the consciousness of his wealth; or, that he was a thief, who had only sought employment among the workmen for the purpose of concealment. "I do not like his appearance," continued the Prince of the Faithful; "have him brought into my presence."

So, when the man was come, the caliph asked him what his occupation was, and he answered that he was a common laborer. "Have you any money laid by?" demanded the caliph. "None," replied the man. "Tell me the truth," again asked the caliph, repeating the question, and again the man answered in the negative.

Then the caliph ordered an officer to strike the man,

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which being done, he immediately cried out for pity and pardon. "Speak the truth," said the officer, "or the caliph will punish you as long as you live." So the man avowed that his trade was that of a tilemaker; and one day, added he, "when I had prepared my kiln, and lit the fire, a man approached me, mounted on an ass, who, dismounting before my kiln, let the ass go, and beginning to undress himself, took from around his waist a girdle, which he placed by his side and began fleaing himself. I, seeing that the man was quite alone, caught him, and throwing him into the furnace of my kiln, closed it down. I then took his girdle, and after killing the ass threw it also into the fire. See, here is the girdle." The caliph took it, and on examining it found it contained some thousands of gold pieces, and, moreover, had its owner's name written upon it. On this discovery the caliph sent criers out, to ask in the streets whether any family had lost a member, or a friend, and if so, to come before him. Soon an aged woman approached, and exclaimed, "My son left me with some thousands of pieces of gold, with which to buy merchandise, and is lost." They showed her the girdle, which she immediately recognized as her son's, and said that it had his name upon it.

The caliph now gave the girdle into the old woman's hands, saying, "See before you the murderer of your son." She demanded the right of retaliation, and the man was forthwith hung upon the door of him whom he had murdered.

All the world admired the caliph's sagacity and commended his justice.

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The Robber and the Woman

From the Arabic

A CERTAIN Robber was a cunning workman and used not to steal aught, till he had wasted all that was with him; moreover, he stole not from his neighbors, neither companied with any of the thieves, for fear lest some one should betray him, and his case become public. After this fashion he abode a great while, in flourishing condition, and his secret was concealed, till Almighty Allah decreed that he broke in upon a beggar, a poor man whom he deemed rich. When he gained access to the house, he found naught, whereat he was wroth, and necessity prompted him to wake that man, who lay asleep alongside of his wife. So he aroused him and said to him, "Show me thy treasure." Now he had no treasure to show; but the Robber believed him not and was instant upon him with threats and blows. When he saw that he got no profit of him, he said to him, "Swear by the oath of divorce from thy wife that thou hast nothing." So he swore and his wife said to him, "Fie on thee! Wilt thou divorce me? Is not the hoard buried in yonder chamber?" Then she turned to the Robber and conjured him to be weightier of blows upon her husband, till he should deliver to him the treasure, anent which he had forsworn himself. So he drubbed him with a grievous drubbing, till he carried him to a certain chamber, wherein she signed to him that the hoard was and that he should take it up. So the Robber entered, he and the husband; and when they were both in the chamber, she locked on them the door, which was a stout and strong, and said to the Robber, "Woe to thee, O fool! Thou hast fallen into the trap and now I have but to cry out and the officers of police will come and take thee and thou wilt lose thy life, O Satan!" Quoth he, "Let me go forth"; and quoth she, "Thou art a man and I am a woman; and in thy hand is a knife, and I am afraid of thee." He cried, "Take

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the knife from me." So she took it and said to her husband, "Art thou a woman and he a man? Pain his neck-nape with flogging, even as he flogged thee; and if he put out his hand to thee, I will cry out a single cry and the policemen will come and take him and hew him in two." So the husband said to him, "O thousand-horned, O dog, O dodger, I owe thee a deposit wherefore thou hast dunned me." And he fell to bashing him grievously with a stick of holm-oak, while he called out to the woman for help and prayed her to deliver him: but she said, "Keep thy place till the morning, and thou shalt see queer things." And her husband beat him within the chamber, till he overcame him and he swooned away. Then he left beating him and when the Robber came to himself, the woman said to her husband, "O man, this house is on hire and we owe its owners much money, and we have naught; so how wilt thou do?" And she went on to bespeak him thus. The Robber asked, "And what is the amount of the rent?" The husband answered, "'Twill be eighty dirhams"; and the thief said, "I will pay this for thee and do thou let me go my way." Then the wife inquired, "O man, how much do we owe the baker and the greengrocer?" Quoth the Robber, "What is the sum of this?" And the husband said, "Sixty dirhams." Rejoined the other, "That makes two hundred dirhams; let me go my way and I will pay them." But the wife said, "O my dear, and the girl groweth up and needs must we marry her and equip her and do what else is needful." So the Robber said to the husband, "How much dost thou want?" and he rejoined, "An hundred dirhams in a modest way." Quoth the Robber, "That maketh three hundred dirhams." Then the woman said, "O my dear, when the girl is married, thou wilt need money for winter expenses, charcoal and firewood and other necessaries." The Robber asked, "What wouldst thou have?" And she answered, "An hundred dirhams." He rejoined, "Be it four hundred dirhams." And she continued, "O my dear and O coolth of mine eyes, needs must my husband have capital in hand, wherewith he may buy

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goods and open him a shop." Said he, "How much will that be?" And she, "An hundred dirhams." Quoth the Robber, "That maketh five hundred dirhams; I will pay it; but may I be triply divorced from my wife if all my possessions amount to more than this, and they be the savings of twenty years! Let me go my way, so I may deliver them to thee." Cried she, "O fool, how shall I let thee go thy way? Utterly impossible! Be pleased to give me a right token." So he gave her a token for his wife and she cried out to her young daughter and said to her, "Keep this door." Then she charged her husband to watch over the Robber till she should return, and repairing to his wife, acquainted her with his case and told her that her husband the thief had been taken and had compounded for his release, at the price of seven hundred dirhams, and named to her the token. Accordingly, she gave her the money and she took it and returned to her house. By this time, the dawn had dawned; so she let the thief go his way, and when he went out, she said to him, "O my dear, when shall I see thee come and take the treasure?" And he, "O indebted one, when thou needest other seven hundred dirhams, wherewith to amend thy case and that of thy children and to pay thy debts." And he went out, hardly believing in his deliverance from her.

The Wonderful Stone

From the Chinese

IN the prefecture of Shun-t'ien [1] there lived a man named Hsing Yün-fei, who was an amateur mineralogist and would pay any price for a good specimen. One day as he was fishing in the river something caught his net, and diving down he brought up a stone about a foot in diameter, beautifully carved on all sides to resemble clustering hills and peaks.

[1] In which Peking is situated.

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He was quite as pleased with this as if he had found some precious stone; and having had an elegant sandal-wood stand made for it, he set his prize upon the table. Whenever it was about to rain, clouds, which from a distance looked like new cottonwool, would come forth from each of the holes or grottoes on the stone, and appear to close them up. By-and-by an influential personage called at the house and begged to see the stone, immediately seizing it and handing it over to a lusty servant, at the same time whipping his horse and riding away. Hsing was in despair; but all he could do was to mourn the loss of his stone, and indulge his anger against the thief. Meanwhile, the servant, who had carried off the stone on his back, stopped to rest at a bridge, when all of a sudden his hand slipped and the stone fell into the water. His master was extremely put out at this, and gave him a sound beating; subsequently hiring several divers, who tried every means in their power to recover the stone, but were quite unable to find it. He then went away, having first published a notice of reward, and by these means many were tempted to seek for the stone. Soon after, Hsing himself came to the spot, and as he mournfully approached the bank, lo! the water became clear, and he could see the stone lying at the bottom. Taking off his clothes he quickly jumped in and brought it out, together with the sandal-wood stand which was still with it. He carried it off home, but being no longer desirous of showing it to people, he had an inner room cleaned and put it in there. Some time afterwards an old man knocked at the door and asked to be allowed to see the stone; whereupon Hsing replied that he had lost it a long time ago. "Isn't that it in the inner room?" said the old man, smiling. "Oh, walk in and see for yourself if you don't believe me," answered Hsing; and the old man did walk in, and there was the stone on the table. This took Hsing very much aback; and the old man then laid his hand upon the stone and said, "This is an old family relic of mine: I lost it many months since. How does it come to be here? I pray you now restore it to me." Hsing didn't know what to say, but

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declared he was the owner of the stone; upon which the old man remarked, "If it is really yours, what evidence can you bring to prove it?" Hsing made no reply; and the old man continued, "To show you that I know this stone, I may mention that it has altogether ninety-two grottoes, and that in the largest of these are five words:

'A stone from Heaven above.'"

Hsing looked and found that there were actually some small characters, no larger than grains of rice, which by straining his eyes a little he managed to read; also that the number of grottoes was as the old man had said. However, he would not give him the stone; and the old man laughed, and asked, "Pray, what right have you to keep other people's things?" He then bowed and went away, Hsing escorting him as far as the door; but when he returned to the room the stone had disappeared. In a great fright, he ran after the old man, who had walked slowly and was not far off, and seizing his sleeve entreated him to give back the stone. "Do you think," said the latter, "that I could conceal a stone a foot in diameter in my sleeve?" But Hsing knew that he must be superhuman, and led him back to the house, where he threw himself on his knees and begged that he might have the stone. "Is it yours or mine?" asked the old man. "Of course it is yours," replied Hsing, "though I hope you will consent to deny yourself the pleasure of keeping it." "In that case," said the old man, "it is back again"; and going into the inner room they found the stone in its old place. "The jewels of this world," observed Hsing's visitor, "should be given to those who know how to take care of them. This stone can choose its own master, and I am very pleased that it should remain with you; at the same time I must inform you that it was in too great a hurry to come into the world of mortals, and has not yet been freed from all contingent calamities. I had better take it away with me, and three years hence you shall have it again. If, however, you insist on keeping it, then

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your span of life will be shortened by three years, that your terms of existence may harmonize together. Are you willing?" Hsing said he was; whereupon the old man with his fingers closed up three of the stone's grottoes, which yielded to his touch like mud. When this was done, he turned to Hsing and told him that the grottoes on that stone represented the years of his life; and then he took his leave, firmly refusing to remain any longer, and not disclosing his name.

More than a year after this, Hsing had occasion to go away on business, and in the night a thief broke in and carried off the stone, taking nothing else at all. When Hsing came home, he was dreadfully grieved, as if his whole object in life was gone; and made all possible inquiries and efforts to get it back, but without the slightest result. Some time passed away, when one day going into a temple Hsing noticed a man selling stones, and among the rest he saw his old friend. Of course he immediately wanted to regain possession of it; but as the stone-seller would not consent, he shouldered the stone and went off to the nearest mandarin. The stone-seller was then asked what proof he could give that the stone was his; and he replied that the number of grottoes was eighty-nine. Hsing inquired if that was all he had to say, and when the other acknowledged that it was, he himself told the magistrate what were the characters inscribed within, also calling attention to the finger marks at the closed-up grottoes. He therefore gained his case, and the mandarin would have bambooed the stone-seller, had he not declared that he bought it in the market for twenty ounces of silver,—whereupon he was dismissed.

A high official next offered Hsing one hundred ounces of silver for it; but he refused to sell it even for ten thousand, which so enraged the would-be purchaser that he worked up a case against Hsing [1] and got him put in prison. Hsing

[1] A common form of revenge in China, and one which is easily carried through when the prosecutor is a man of wealth and influence.

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was thereby compelled to pawn a great deal of his property; and then the official sent some one to try if the affair could not be managed through his son, to which Hsing, on hearing of the attempt, steadily refused to consent, saying that he and the stone could not be parted even in death. His wife, however, and his son, laid their heads together, and sent the stone to the high official, and Hsing only heard of it when he arrived home from the prison. He cursed his wife and beat his son, and frequently tried to make away with himself, though luckily his servants always managed to prevent him from succeeding.[1] At night he dreamed that a noble-looking personage appeared to him, and said, "My name is Shih Ch'ing-hsü (Stone from Heaven). Do not grieve. I purposely quitted you for a year and more; but next year on the 20th of the eighth moon, at dawn, come to the Hai-tai Gate and buy me back for two strings of cash." Hsing was overjoyed at this dream, and carefully took down the day mentioned. Meanwhile the stone was at the official's private house; but as the cloud manifestations ceased, the stone was less and less prized; and the following year when the official was disgraced for maladministration and subsequently died, Hsing met some of his servants at the Hai-tai Gate going off to sell the stone, and purchased it back from them for two strings of cash.

Hsing lived till he was eighty-nine; and then having prepared the necessaries for his interment, bade his son bury the stone with him,[2] which was accordingly done. Six months later robbers broke into the vault[3] and made off with the stone, and his son tried in vain to secure their capture; however, a few days afterwards, he was trav-

[1] Another favorite method of revenging oneself upon an enemy, who is in many cases held responsible for the death thus occasioned.

[2] Valuables of some kind or other are often placed in the coffins of wealthy Chinese; and women are almost always provided with a certain quantity of jewels with which to adorn themselves in the realms below.

[3] One of the most heinous offenses in the Chinese Penal Code.

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eling with his servants, when suddenly two men rushed forth dripping with perspiration, and looking up into the air, acknowledged their crime, saying, "Mr. Hsing, please don't torment us thus! We took the stone, and sold it for only four ounces of silver." Hsing's son and his servants then seized these men, and took them before the magistrate, where they at once acknowledged their guilt. Asking what had become of the stone, they said they had sold it to a member of the magistrate's family; and when it was produced, that official took such a fancy to it that he gave it to one of his servants and bade him place it in the treasury. Thereupon the stone slipped out of the servant's hand and broke into a hundred pieces, to the great astonishment of all present. The magistrate now had the thieves bambooed and sent them away; but Hsing's son picked up the broken pieces of the stone and buried them in his father's grave.

The Weaver Who Became a Leach

From the Arabic

THERE was once, in the land of Fars (Persia), a man who wedded a woman higher than himself in rank and nobler of lineage, but she had no guardian to preserve her from want. She loathed to marry one who was beneath her; yet she wived with him because of need, and took of him a bond in writing to the effect that he would ever be under her order to bid and forbid and would never thwart her in word or in deed. Now the man was a Weaver and he bound himself in writing to pay his wife ten thousand dirhams in case of default. After such fashion they abode a long while till one day the wife went out to fetch water, of which she had need, and saw a leach who had spread a carpet hard by the road, whereon he had set out great store of simples and implements of medicine and he was speaking and muttering charms, whilst the folk flocked to him

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from all quarters and girt him about on every side. The Weaver's wife marveled at the largeness of the physician's fortune and said in herself, "Were my husband thus, he would lead an easy life and that wherein we are of straitness and poverty would be widened to him." Then she returned home, cark-full and care-full; and when her husband saw her in this condition, he questioned her of her case and she said to him, "Verily, my breast is narrowed by reason of thee and of the very goodness of thine intent," presently adding, "Narrow means suit me not and thou in thy present craft gainest naught; so either do thou seek out a business other than this or pay me my rightful due and let me wend my ways." Her husband chid her for this and advised her to take patience; but she would not be turned from her design and said to him, "Go forth and watch yonder physician how he doth and learn from him what he saith." Said he, "Let not thy heart be troubled," and added, "I will go every day to the session of the leach." So he began resorting daily to the physician and committing to memory his answers and that which he spoke of jargon, till he had gotten a great matter by rote, and all this he learned and thoroughly digested it. Then he returned to his wife and said to her, "I have stored up the physician's sayings in memory and have mastered his manner of muttering and diagnoses and prescribing remedies, and I wot by heart the names of the medicines and of all the diseases, and there abideth of thy bidding naught undone: so what dost thou command me now to do?" Quoth she, "Leave the loom and open thyself a leach's shop"; but quoth he, "My fellow-townsmen know me and this affair will not profit me, save in a land of strangerhood; so come, let us go out from this city and get us to a foreign land and there live." And she said, "Do whatso thou willest." Accordingly, he arose and taking his weaving gear, sold it and bought with the price drugs and simples and wrought himself a carpet, with which they set out and journeyed to a certain village, where they took up their abode. Then the man fell to going round about

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the hamlets and villages and outskirts of towns, after donning leach's dress; and he began to earn his livelihood and make much gain. Their affairs prospered and their circumstances were bettered; wherefore they praised Allah for their present ease and the village became to them a home. In this way he lived for a long time, but at length he wandered anew, and the days and the nights ceased not to transport him from country to country, till he came to the land of the Roum (Greeks) and lighted down in a city thereof, wherein was Jalinus (Galen) the sage; but the Weaver knew him not, nor was aware who he was. So he fared forth, as was his wont, in quest of a place where the folk might be gathered together, and hired the courtyard of Jalinus. There he spread his carpet and setting out on it his simples and instruments of medicine, praised himself and his skill and claimed a cleverness such as none but he might claim. Jalinus heard that which he affirmed of his understanding, and it was certified unto him and established in his mind that the man was a skilled leach of the leaches of the Persians and he said in himself, "Unless he had confidence in his knowledge and were minded to confront me and contend with me, he had not sought the door of my house, neither had he spoken that which he hath spoken." And care and doubt got hold upon Jalinus: so he drew near the Weaver and addressed himself to see how his doings should end, whilst the folk began to flock to him and describe to him their ailments, and he would answer them thereof, hitting the mark one while and missing it another while, so that naught appeared to Jalinus of his fashion whereby his mind might be assured that he had justly estimated his skill. Presently, up came a woman, and when the Weaver saw her afar off, he said to her, "Is not your husband a Jew and is not his ailment flatulence?" "Yes," replied the woman, and the folk marveled at this; wherefore the man was magnified in the eyes of Jalinus, for that he heard speech such as was not of the usage of doctors. Then the woman asked, "What is the remedy?" and the Weaver

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answered, "Bring the honorarium." So she paid him a dirham and he gave her medicines contrary to that ailment and such as would only aggravate the complaint. When Jalinus saw what appeared to him of the man's incapacity, he turned to his disciples and pupils and bade them fetch the mock doctor, with all his gear and drugs. Accordingly they brought him into his presence without stay or delay, and when Jalinus saw him before him, he asked him, "Knowest thou me?" and the other answered, "No, nor did I ever set eyes on thee before this day." Quoth the sage, "Dost thou know Jalinus?" and quoth the Weaver, "No." Then said Jalinus, "What drove thee to do that which thou dost?" So he acquainted him with his adventure, especially with the dowry and the obligation by which he was bound with regard to his wife, whereat the sage marveled and certified himself anent the matter of the marriage-settlement. Then he bade lodge him near himself and entreated him with kindness and took him apart and said to him, "Expound to me whence thou knewest that the woman was from a man, and he a stranger and a Jew, and that his ailment was flatulence?" The Weaver replied, "'Tis well. Thou must know that we people of Persia are skilled in physiognomy, and I saw the woman to be rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed, and tall-statured. These qualities belong not to the women of Roum; moreover, I saw her burning with anxiety; so I knew that the patient was her husband. As for his strangerhood, I noted that the dress of the woman differed from that of the townsfolk, wherefore I knew that she was a foreigner; and in her hand I saw a yellow rag, which garred me wot that the sick man was a Jew and she a Jewess. Moreover, she came to me on First Day; and 'tis the Jew's custom to take meat-puddings and food that hath passed the night and eat them on the Saturday their Sabbath, hot and cold, and they exceed in eating; wherefore flatulence and indigestion betide them. Thus I was directed and guessed that which thou hast heard." Now when Jalinus heard this, he ordered the Weaver the amount of his

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wife's dowry and bade him pay it to her and said to him, "Divorce her." Furthermore, he forbade him from returning to the practice of physic and warned him never again to take to wife a woman of rank higher than his own; and he gave him his spending-money and charged him to return to his proper craft.

Viśākhā

From the Tibetan

MṚGADHARA, the first minister of King Prasenajit of Kośala, after he had married a wife of birth like unto his own, had seven sons. To six of these he gave names at his pleasure, but the youngest one he called Viśākha.

After his wife's death he arranged marriages for his six elder sons, but they and their wives gave themselves up to dress, and troubled themselves in no wise with household affairs.

The householder Mṛgadhara was sitting one day absorbed in thought, resting his cheek upon his arm. A Brahman, who was on friendly terms with him, saw him sitting thus absorbed in thought, and asked him what was the cause of his behavior. He replied, "My sons and their wives have given themselves up to dress, and do not trouble themselves about household affairs, so that the property is going to ruin."

"Why do you not arrange a marriage for Viśākha?"

"Who can tell whether he will make things better, or bring them to still greater ruin?"

"If you will trust to me, I will look for a maiden for him."

The minister consented, and the Brahman went his way. In the course of his researches he came to the land of Champā. In it there lived a householder named Balamitra, whose daughter Viśākhā was fair to see, well proportioned,

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in the bloom of youth, intelligent and clever. Just as the Brahman arrived, she and some other girls who were in quest of amusement were setting out for a park. On seeing the girls, he thought that he would like to look at them a little. So he followed slowly after them, occupied in regarding them. The girls, who were for the most part of a frivolous nature, sometimes ran, sometimes skipped, sometimes rolled about, sometimes laughed, sometimes spun round, sometimes sang, and did other undignified things. But Viśākhā, with the utmost decorum, at an even pace walked slowly along with them. When they came to the park, the other girls undressed at the edge of the tank, entered into it, and began to sport. But Viśākhā lifted up her clothes by degrees as she went into the water, and by degrees let them down again as she came out of the water, so circumspect was she in her behavior. After their bath, when the girls had assembled at a certain spot, they first partook of food themselves, and then gave to their attendants to eat; but Viśākhā first of all gave food to the persons in attendance, and then herself began to eat.

When the girls had finished their eating and drinking and had enjoyed the charm of the park, they went away. As there was water to be waded through on the road, the girls took off their boots and walked through it, but Viśākhā kept her boots on. They went a little farther and came to a wood. Into this Amra wood she entered, keeping her parasol up, though the others had discarded theirs. Presently a wind arose together with rain, and the other girls took shelter in a temple, but Viśākhā remained in the open air. The Brahman, who had followed her, and had noted her characteristics and her behavior, marveled greatly and began to question her, saying:

"O maiden, whose daughter are you?"

"I am Balamitra's daughter."

"O maiden, be not angry if I ask you a few questions."

She smiled at first, and then said, "O uncle, why should I be angry? Please to ask them."

"While these girls, as they went, were all running, skip-

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ping, rolling, turning round, singing, and doing other undignified things, you wended your way slowly, decorously, and in a seemly manner, reaching the park together with them."

Viśākhā replied, "All girls are a merchandise which their parents vend. If in leaping or rolling I were to break an arm or a leg, who then would woo me? I should certainly have to be kept by my parents as long as I lived."

"Good, O maiden; I understand."

He said to her next, "These girls took off their clothes at a certain place, and went into the water and sported in it unclothed, but you lifted up your clothes by degrees as you went deeper into the water."

"O uncle, it is necessary that women should be shamefaced and shy, and so it would not be well that anyone should look upon me unclothed."

"O maiden, who would see you there?"

"O uncle, you would have seen me there yourself."

"Good, O maiden; that also I comprehend."

He said to her further, "These girls first took food themselves and then gave to the persons in attendance; but you first gave food to the persons in attendance, and then took your own."

"O uncle, that was for this reason: we, reaping the fruits of our merits, constantly have feast-days; but they, reaping the fruits of their trouble, very seldom obtain great things."

"Good, O maiden; I comprehend this also."

He asked her, moreover, "While all the world wears boots on dry land, why did you keep yours on in the water?"

"O uncle, the world is foolish. It is precisely when one is in water that one should wear boots."

"For what reason?"

"On dry land one can see tree-stems, thorns, stones, prickles, fragments of fish scales or shells of reptiles, but in the water none of these things can be seen. Therefore we ought to wear boots in the water and not upon dry land."

"Good, O maiden; this also I understand."

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Then he asked her this question: "These girls kept their parasols up in the sun; you kept yours up in the wood under the shade of the trees. What was the meaning of that?"

"O uncle, the world is foolish. It is precisely when in a wood that one must keep a parasol up."

"For what reason?"

"Because a wood is always full of birds and monkeys. The birds let fall their droppings and pieces of bones, and the monkeys their muck and scraps of the fruit they eat. Besides, as they are of a wild nature, they go springing from bough to bough, and bits of wood come falling down. When one is in the open this does not happen, or, if it takes place, it is but seldom. Therefore a parasol must be kept open in a wood; in the open it is not necessary to do so."

"Good, O maiden; this also I comprehend."

Presently he said, "These girls took refuge in a temple when the wind arose with rain, but you remained in the open air."

"O uncle, one certainly ought to remain in the open air and not take refuge in a temple."

"O maiden, what is the reason for that?"

"O uncle, such empty temples are never free from orphans, the low-born, and sharpers. If one of them were to touch me on a limb or joint as I entered such a temple, would not that be unpleasant to my parents? Moreover, it is better to lose one's life in the open than to enter an empty temple."

Full of delight at the demeanor of the maiden, the Brahman betook himself to the dwelling of the householder Balamitra and said, desiring to obtain the maiden:

"May it be well! May it be good!"

The people of the house said, "O Brahman, it is not yet the time for asking; but what do you ask for?"

"I ask for your daughter."

"On whose behalf?"

"On behalf of the son, Viśākha by name, of Mṛgadhara, the first minister of Śrāvastī."

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They replied, "It is true that we and he are of the same caste, but his country lies too far away."

The Brahman said, "It is precisely in a far-away country that a man should choose a husband for his daughter."

"How so?"

"If she is married in the neighborhood, joy increases when news comes that she is prosperous; but if a misfortune occurs, a man's property may be brought to naught, he being exhausted by gifts, sacrifices, and tokens of reverence."

They said, "This being so, we will give our daughter."

After Viśākhā's marriage, on one occasion some country folks came bringing a mare and her foal. As they could not tell which was the mare and which the foal, the king ordered the ministers to examine them closely, and to report to him on the matter. The ministers examined them both for a whole day, became weary, and arrived at no conclusion after all. When Mṛgadhara went home in the evening, Viśākhā touched his feet and said, "O master, wherefore do ye return so late?" He told her everything that had occurred. Then Viśākhā said, "O master, what is there to investigate in that? Fodder should be laid before them in equal parts. The foal, after rapidly eating up its own share, will begin to devour its mother's also; but the mother, without eating, will hold up her head like this. That is the proper test."

Mṛgadhara told this to the ministers, who applied the test according to these instructions, and after daybreak they reported to the king, "This is the mother, O king, and that is the foal." The king asked how they knew that.

"O king, the case is so and so."

"How was it you did not know that yesterday?"

"O king, how could we know it? Viśākhā has instructed us since."

Said the king, "The Champā maiden is wise."

It happened that a man who was bathing had left his boots on the bank. Another man came up, tied the boots

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round his head, and began to bathe likewise. When the first man had done bathing and came out of the water, he missed the boots. The other man said, "Hey, man, what are you looking for?"

"My boots."

"Where are your boots? When you have boots, you should tie them round your head, as I do, before going into the water."

As a dispute arose between the two men as to whom the boots belonged to, they both had recourse to the king. The king told the ministers to investigate the case thoroughly, and to give the boots to the proper owner. The ministers began to investigate the case, and examined first the one man and then the other. Each of the men affirmed that he was the owner. While these assertions were being made, the day came to an end, and in the evening the ministers returned home wearied out, without having brought the matter to a satisfactory conclusion. Viśākhā questioned Mṛgadhara, and he told her all about it, whereupon she said, "O master, what is there to investigate? Say to one of them, 'Take one of the boots,' and to the other man, 'Take the other boot.' The real owner will say in that case, 'Why should my two boots be separated?' But the other, the man to whom they do not really belong, will say, 'What good do I gain by this if I only get one boot?' That is the proper test to apply."

Mṛgadhara went and told this to the ministers, and so forth, as is written above, down to the words, "The king said, 'The Champā maiden is wise.'"

It happened that some merchants brought a stem of sandal-wood to the king as a present, but no one knew which was the upper end of it and which the lower. So the king ordered his ministers to settle the question. They spent a whole day in examining the stem, but they could make nothing of it. In the evening they returned to their homes. Mṛgadhara again told Viśākhā all about the matter, and she said, "O master, what is there to investigate? Place the stem in water. The root end will then

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sink, but the upper end will float upward. That is the proper test."

Mṛgadhara communicated this to the ministers, and so forth, as written above, down to the words, "The king said, 'The Champā maiden is wise.'"

There was a householder in a hill-village who, after he had married in his own rank, remained without either son or daughter. As he longed earnestly for a child, he took unto himself a concubine. Thereupon his wife, who was of a jealous disposition, had recourse to a spell for the purpose of rendering that woman barren. But as that woman was quite pure, she became with child, and at the end of nine months bare a son. Then she reflected thus: "As the worst of all enmities is the enmity between a wife and a concubine, and the stepmother will be sure to seek for a means of killing the child, what ought my husband, what ought I to do? As I shall not be able to keep it alive, I had better give it to her."

After taking counsel with her husband, who agreed with her in the matter, she said to the wife, "O sister, I give you my son; take him." The wife thought, "As she who has a son ranks as the mistress of the house, I will bring him up."

After she had taken charge of the boy the father died. A dispute arose between the two women as to the possession of the house, each of them asserting that it belonged to her. They had recourse to the king. He ordered his ministers to go to the house and to make inquiries as to the ownership of the son. They investigated the matter, but the day came to an end before they had brought it to a satisfactory conclusion. In the evening they returned to their homes. Viśākhā again questioned Mṛgadhara, who told her everything. Viśākhā said, "What need is there of investigation? Speak to the two women thus: 'As we do not know to which of you two the boy belongs, let her who is the strongest take the boy.' When each of them has taken hold of one of the boy's hands, and he begins to cry out on account

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of the pain, the real mother will let go, being full of compassion for him, and knowing that if her child remains alive she will be able to see it again; but the other, who has no compassion for him, will not let go. Then beat her with a switch, and she will thereupon confess the truth as to the whole matter. That is the proper test."

Mṛgadhara told this to the ministers, and so forth, as is written above, down to the words, "The king said, 'The Champā maiden is wise.'"

Told by the Constable

From the Arabic

KNOW ye that when I entered the service of this Emir, I had a great repute and every low fellow and lewd feared me most of all mankind, and when I rode through the city, each and every of the folk would point at me with their fingers and sign at me with their eyes. It happened one day, as I sat in the palace of the Prefecture, back-propped against a wall, considering in myself, suddenly there feli somewhat in my lap, and behold, it was a purse sealed and tied. So I hent it in hand and lo! it had in it an hundred dirhams, but I found not who threw it and I said, "Lauded be the Lord, the King of the Kingdoms!" Another day, as I sat in the same way, somewhat fell on me and startled me, and lookye, 'twas a purse like the first: I took it and hiding the matter, made as though I slept, albeit sleep was not with me. One day as I thus shammed sleep, I suddenly sensed in my lap a hand, and in it a purse of the finest; so I seized the hand and behold, 'twas that of a fair woman. Quoth I to her, "O my lady, who art thou?" and quoth she, "Rise and come away from here, that I may make myself known to thee." Presently I rose up and following her, walked on, without tarrying, till we stopped at the door of a high-builded house, whereupon I asked her,

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"O my lady, who art thou? Indeed, thou hast done me kindness, and what is the reason of this?" She answered, "By Allah, O Captain Mu'in, I am a woman on whom love and longing are sore for desire of the daughter of the Kazi Amin al-Hukm. Now there was between me and her what was and fondness for her fell upon my heart and I agreed upon an assignation with her, according to possibility and convenience; but her father Amin al-Hukm took her and went away, and my heart cleaveth to her and yearning and distraction waxed sore upon me for her sake." I said to her, marveling the while at her words, "What wouldst thou have me do?" and said she, "O Captain Mu'in, I would have thee lend me a helping hand." Quoth I, "Where am I and where is the daughter of the Kazi Amin al-Hukm?" and quoth she, "Be assured that I would not have thee intrude upon the Kazi's daughter, but I would fain work for the winning of my wishes. This is my will and my want which may not be wroughten save by thine aid." Then she added, "I mean this night to go with heart enheartened and hire me bracelets and armlets and anklets of price; then will I hie me and sit in the street wherein is the house of Amin al-Hukm; and when 'tis the season of the round and folk are asleep, do thou pass, thou and those who are with thee of the men, and thou wilt see me sitting and on me fine raiment and ornaments and wilt smell on me the odor of Ottars; whereupon do thou question me of my case and I will say: I hail from the Citadel and am of the daughters of the deputies, and I came down into the town for a purpose; but night overtook me all unawares and the Zuwaylah Gate was shut against me and all the other portals and I knew not whither I should wend this night. Presently I saw this street and noting the goodly fashion of its ordinance and its cleanliness, I sheltered me therein against break of day. When I speak these words to thee with complete self-possession, the Chief of the watch will have no ill suspicion of me, but will say: There's no help but that we leave her with one who will take care of her till morning. Thereto do thou rejoin: 'Twere best that she night with Amin al-Hukm and lie

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with his wives and children until dawn of day. Then straightway knock at the Kazi's door, and thus shall I have secured admission into his house, without inconvenience, and won my wish; and—the Peace!" I said to her, "By Allah, this is an easy matter." So, when the night was blackest, we rose to make our round, followed by men with girded swords, and went about the ways and compassed the city, till we came to the street where was the woman, and it was the middle of the night. Here we smelled mighty rich scents and heard the clink of rings: so I said to my comrades, "Methinks I espy a specter"; and the Captain of the watch cried, "See what it is." Accordingly, I undertook the work and entering the thoroughfare presently came out again and said, "I have found a fair woman and she telleth me that she is from the Citadel and that dark night surprised her and she saw this street and noting its cleanness and goodly fashion of ordinance, knew that it belonged to a great man and that needs must there be in it a guardian to keep watch over it, so she sheltered her therein." Quoth the Captain of the watch to me, "Take her and carry her to thy house"; but quoth I, "I seek refuge with Allah! My house is no strong box and on this woman are trinkets and fine clothing. By Allah, we will not deposit the lady save with Amin al-Hukm, in whose street she hath been since the first starkening of the darkness; therefore do thou leave her with him till the break of day." He rejoined, "Do whatso thou willest." So I rapped at the Kazi's gate and out came a black slave of his slaves, to whom said I, "O my lord, take this woman and let her be with you till day shall dawn, for that the lieutenant of the Emir Alam al-Din hath found her with trinkets and fine apparel on her, sitting at the door of your house, and we feared lest her responsibility be upon you; wherefore I suggested 'twere meetest she night with you." So the chattel opened and took her in with him. Now when the morning morrowed, the first who presented himself before the Emir was the Kazi Amin al-Hukm, leaning on two of his negro slaves; and he was crying out and calling for aid and saying, "O Emir, crafty

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and perfidious, yesternight thou depositedst with me a woman and broughtest her into my house and home, and she arose in the dark and took from me the moneys of the little orphans my wards, six great bags, each containing a thousand dinars, and made off; but as for me, I will say no syllable to thee except in the Soldan's presence." When the Wali heard these words, he was troubled and rose and sat down in his agitation; then he took the Judge and placing him by his side, soothed him and exhorted him to patience, till he had made an end of talk, when he turned to the officers and questioned them of that. They fixed the affair on me and said, "We know nothing of this matter but from Captain Mu'in al-Din." So the Kazi turned to me and said, "Thou wast of accord to practice upon me with this woman, for she said she came from the Citadel." As for me, I stood, with my head bowed ground-wards, forgetting both Sunnah and Farz, and remained sunk in thought, saying, "How came I to be the dupe of that wily wench?" Then cried the Emir to me, "What aileth thee that thou answerest not?" Thereupon I replied, "O my lord, 'tis a custom among the folk that he who hath a payment to make at a certain date is allowed three days' grace: do thou have patience with me so long, and if, at the end of that time, the culprit be not found, I will be responsible for that which is lost." When the folk heard my speech they all approved it as reasonable and the Wali turned to the Kazi and sware to him that he would do his utmost to recover the stolen moneys adding, "And they shall be restored to thee." Then he went away, whilst I mounted without stay or delay and began to-ing and fro-ing about the world without purpose, and indeed I was become the underling of a woman without honesty or honor; and I went my rounds in this way all that my day and that my night, but happened not upon tidings of her; and thus I did on the morrow. On the third day I said to myself, "Thou art mad or silly"; for I was wandering in quest of a woman who knew me and I knew her not, she being veiled when I met her. Then I went round about the third day till the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, and sore

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waxed my cark and my care for I kenned that there remained to me of my life but the morrow, when the Chief of Police would send for me. However, as sundown-time came, I passed through one of the main streets, and saw a woman at a window; her door was ajar and she was clapping her hands and casting sidelong glances at me, as who should say, "Come up by the door." So I went up, without fear or suspicion, and when I entered, she rose and clasped me to her breast. I marveled at the matter and quoth she to me, "I am she whom thou depositedst with Amin al-Hukm." Quoth I to her, "O my sister, I have been going round and round in request of thee, for indeed thou hast done a deed which will be chronicled and hast cast me into red death on thine account." She asked me, "Dost thou speak thus to me and thou a captain of men?" and I answered, "How should I not be troubled, seeing that I be in concern for an affair I turn over and over in mind, more by token that I continue my day long going about searching for thee and in the night I watch its stars and planets?" Cried she, "Naught shall betide save weal, and thou shalt get the better of him." So saying, she rose and going to a chest, drew out therefrom six bags full of gold and said to me, "This is what I took from Amin al-Hukm's house. So an thou wilt, restore it; else the whole is lawfully thine; and if thou desire other than this, thou shalt obtain it; for I have moneys in plenty and I had no design herein save to marry thee." Then she arose and opening other chests, brought out therefrom wealth galore and I said to her, "O my sister, I have no wish for all this, nor do I want aught except to be quit of that wherein I am." Quoth she, "I came not forth of the Kazi's house without preparing for thine acquittance." Then said she to me, "When the morrow shall morn and Amin al-Hukm shall come to thee bear with him till he have made an end of his speech, and when he is silent, return him no reply; and if the Wali ask: What aileth thee that thou answerest me not? do thou rejoin: O lord and master know that the two words are not alike, but there is no helper for the conquered one save

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Allah Almighty. The Kazi will cry, What is the meaning of thy saying, The two words are not alike? And do thou retort: I deposited with thee a damsel from the palace of the Sultan, and most likely some enemy of hers in thy household hath transgressed against her or she hath been secretly murdered. Verily, there were on her raiment and ornaments worth a thousand ducats, and hadst thou put to the question those who are with thee of slaves and slave-girls, needs must thou have litten on some traces of the crime. When he heareth this from thee, his trouble will redouble and he will be angered and will make oath that thou hast no help for it but to go with him to his house: however, do thou say, That will I not do, for I am the party aggrieved, more especially because I am under suspicion with thee. If he redouble in calling on Allah's aid and conjure thee by the oath of divorce saying, Thou must assuredly come, do thou reply, By Allah, I will not go, unless the Chief also go with me. Then, as soon as thou comest to the house, begin by searching the terrace-roofs; then rummage the closets and cabinets; and if thou find naught, humble thyself before the Kazi and be abject and feign thyself subjected, and after examine well the door, because there is a dark corner there. Then come forward, with heart harder than syenite-stone, and lay hold upon a jar of the jars and raise it from its place. Thou wilt find there under it a mantilla-skirt; bring it out publicly and call the Wali in a loud voice, before those who are present. Then open it and thou wilt find it full of blood, and therein a woman's walking boots and somewhat of linen." When I heard from her these words, I rose to go out and she said to me, "Take these hundred sequins, so they may succor thee; and such is my guest-gift to thee." Accordingly I took them and leaving her door ajar returned to my lodging. Next morning, up came the Judge, with his face like the ox-eye, and asked, "In the name of Allah, where is my debtor and where is my property?" Then he wept and cried out and said to the Wali, "Where is that ill-omened fellow, who aboundeth in robbery and villainy?" Thereupon the Chief turned to me and said, "Why dost

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thou not answer the Kazi?" and I replied, "O Emir, the two heads are not equal, and I, I have no helper; but, an the right be on my side 'twill appear." At this the Judge grew hotter of temper and cried out, "Woe to thee, O ill-omened wight! How wilt thou make manifest that the right is on thy side?" I replied, "O our lord the Kazi, I deposited with thee and in thy charge a woman whom we found at thy door, and on her raiment and ornaments of price. Now she is gone, even as yesterday is gone; and after this thou turnest upon us and suest me for six thousand gold pieces. By Allah, this is none other than a mighty great wrong, and assuredly some foe of hers in thy household hath transgressed against her!" With this the Judge's wrath redoubled and he swore by the most solemn of oaths that I should go with him and search his house. I replied, "By Allah I will not go, unless the Wali go with us; for, an he be present, he and the officers, thou wilt not dare to work thy wicked will upon me." So the Kazi rose and swore an oath, saying, "By the truth of Him who created mankind, we will not go but with the Emir!" Accordingly we repaired to the Judge's house, accompanied by the Chief, and going up, searched it through, but found naught; whereat fear fell upon me and the Wali turned to me and said, "Fie upon thee, O ill-omened fellow! thou hast put us to shame before the men." All this, and I wept and went round about right and left, with the tears running down my face, till we were about to go forth and drew near the door of the house. I looked at the place which the woman had mentioned and asked, "What is yonder dark place I see?" Then said I to the men, "Pull up this jar with me." They did my bidding and I saw somewhat appearing under the jar and said, "Rummage and look at what is under it." So they searched, and behold, they came upon a woman's mantilla and walking boots stained with blood, which when I espied, I fell down in a fainting-fit. Now when the Wali saw this, he said, "By Allah, the Captain is excused!" Then my comrades came round about me and sprinkled water on my face till I recovered, when I arose and accosting the Kazi (who was

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covered with confusion), said to him, "Thou seest that suspicion is fallen on thee, and indeed this affair is no light matter, because this woman's family will assuredly not sit down quietly under her loss." Therewith the Kazi's heart quaked and fluttered for that he knew the suspicion had reverted upon him, wherefore his color yellowed and his limbs smote together; and he paid of his own money, after the measure of that he had lost, so we would quench that fire for him. Then we departed from him in peace, whilst I said within myself, "Indeed, the woman falsed me not." After that I tarried till three days had passed, when I went to the Hammam and changing my clothes, betook myself to her home, but found the door shut and covered with dust. So I asked the neighbors of her and they answered, "This house hath been empty of habitants these many days; but three days agone there came a woman with an ass, and at supper-time last night she took her gear and went away." Hereat I turned back, bewildered in my wit, and for many a day after I inquired of the dwellers in that street concerning her, but could happen on no tidings of her. And indeed I wondered at the eloquence of her tongue and the readiness of her talk; and this is the most admirable of all I have seen and of whatso hath betided me.

The Unjust Sentence

From the Chinese

MR. CHU was a native of Yang-ku, and, as a young man, was much given to playing tricks and talking in a loose kind of way. Having lost his wife, he went off to ask a certain old woman to arrange another match for him; and on the way he chanced to fall in with a neighbor's wife who took his fancy very much. So he said in joke to the old woman, "Get me that stylish-looking, handsome lady, and I shall be quite satisfied."

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"I'll see what I can do," replied the old woman, also joking, "if you will manage to kill her present husband"; upon which Chu laughed and said he certainly would do so. Now about a month afterwards, the said husband, who had gone out to collect some money due to him, was actually killed in a lonely spot; and the magistrate of the district immediately summoned the neighbors and beadle and held the usual inquest, but was unable to find any clue to the murderer. However, the old woman told the story of her conversation with Chu, and suspicion at once fell upon him. The constables came and arrested him, but he stoutly denied the charge; and the magistrate now began to suspect the wife of the murdered man. Accordingly, she was severely beaten and tortured in several ways until her strength failed her, and she falsely acknowledged her guilt.[1]

[1] Such has doubtless been the occasional result of torture in China; but the singular keenness of the mandarins, as a body, in recognizing the innocent and detecting the guilty,—that is, when their own avaricious interests are not involved,—makes this contingency so rare as to be almost unknown. A good instance came under my own notice at Swatow in 1876. For years a Chinese servant had been employed at the foreign Custom House to carry a certain sum of money every week to the bank, and at length his honesty was above suspicion. On the occasion to which I allude he had been sent as usual with the bag of dollars, but after a short absence he rushed back with a frightful gash on his right arm, evidently inflicted by a heavy chopper, and laying the bone bare. The money was gone. He said he had been invited into a tea-house by a couple of soldiers whom he could point out; that they had tried to wrest the bag from him, and that at length one of them seized a chopper and inflicted so severe a wound on his arm, that in his agony he dropped the money, and the soldiers made off with it. The latter were promptly arrested and confronted with their accuser; but, with almost indecent haste, the police magistrate dismissed the case against them, and declared that he believed the man had made away with the money and inflicted the wound on himself. And so it turned out to be, under overwhelming evidence. This servant of proved fidelity had given way to a rash hope of making a little money at the gaming table; had hurried into one of these hells and lost everything in three stakes; had wounded himself on the right arm (he was a left-handed man), and had concocted the story of the soldiers, all within

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Chu was then examined, and he said, "This delicate woman could not bear the agony of your tortures; what she has stated is untrue; and, even should her wrong escape the notice of the Gods, for her to die in this way with a stain upon her name is more than I can endure. I will tell the whole truth. I killed the husband that I might secure the wife: she knew nothing at all about it." And when the magistrate asked for some proof, Chu said his bloody clothes would be evidence enough; but when they sent to search his house, no bloody clothes were forthcoming. He was then beaten till he fainted; yet when he came round he still stuck to what he had said. "It is my mother," cried he, "who will not sign the death-warrant of her son. Let me go myself and I will get the clothes." So he was escorted by a guard to his home, and there he explained to his mother that whether she gave up or withheld the clothes it was all the same; that in either case he would have to die, and it was better to die early than late. Thereupon his mother wept bitterly, and going into the bedroom, brought out, after a short delay, the required clothes, which were taken at once to the magistrate's. There was now no doubt as to the truth of Chu's story; and as nothing occurred to change the magistrate's opinion, Chu was thrown into prison to await the day for his execution. Meanwhile, as the magistrate was one day inspecting his jail, suddenly a man appeared in the hall, who glared at him fiercely and roared out, "Dull-headed fool! unfit to be the guardian of the people's interests!" whereupon the crowd of servants standing round rushed forward to seize him, but with one sweep of his arms he laid them all flat on the ground. The magistrate was frightened out of his wits, and tried to escape, but the man cried out to him, "I am one of Kuan Ti's lieutenants. If you move an inch you are

the space of about twenty-five minutes. When he saw that he was detected, he confessed everything, without having received a single blow of the bamboo; but up to the moment of his confession the foreign feeling against that police-magistrate was undeniably strong.

—HERBERT A. GILES, TRANSLATOR.

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lost." So the magistrate stood there, shaking from head to foot with fear, while his visitor continued, "The murderer is Kung Piao: Chu had nothing to do with it."

The lieutenant then fell down on the ground, and was to all appearance lifeless; however, after a while he recovered, his face having quite changed, and when they asked him his name, lo! it was Kung Piao. Under the application of the bamboo he confessed his guilt. Always an unprincipled man, he had heard that the murdered man was going out to collect money, and thinking he would be sure to bring it back with him, he had killed him, but had found nothing. Then when he learned that Chu had acknowledged the crime as his own doing, he had rejoiced in secret at such a stroke of luck. How he had got into the magistrate's hall he was quite unable to say. The magistrate now called for some explanation of Chu's bloody clothes, which Chu himself was unable to give; but his mother, who was at once sent for, stated that she had cut her own arm to stain them, and when they examined her they found on her left arm the scar of a recent wound. The magistrate was lost in amazement at all this; unfortunately for him the reversal of his sentence cost him his appointment, and he died in poverty, unable to find his way home. As for Chu, the widow of the murdered man married him in the following year, out of gratitude for his noble behavior.

The Scar on the Throat

From the Arabic

THERE was once a king named Sulayman Shah, who was goodly of policy and counsel, and he had a brother who died and left a daughter; so Sulayman Shah reared her with the best of rearing and the girl became a model of reason and perfection, nor was there in her time a more beautiful than she. Now the king had two sons, one of whom

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he had appointed in his mind to wed her, while the other purposed to take her. The elder son's name was Bahluwan and that of the younger Malik Shah, and the girl was called Shah Khatun. Now one day King Sulayman Shah went in to his brother's daughter and, kissing her head, said to her, "Thou art my daughter and dearer to me than a child, for the love of thy late father who hath found mercy; wherefore I purpose espousing thee to one of my sons and appointing him my heir apparent, so he may be king after me. Look, then, which thou wilt have of my sons, for that thou hast been reared with them and knowest them." The maiden arose and kissing his hand, said to him, "O my lord, I am thine hand-maid and thou art the ruler over me; so whatever liketh thee do that same, inasmuch as thy wish is higher and honorabler and holier than mine, and if thou wouldst have me serve thee as a hand-maid for the rest of my life, 'twere fairer to me than any mate." The king commended her speech, and conferred on her a robe of honor and gave her magnificent gifts; after which, his choice having fallen upon his younger son, Malik Shah, he wedded her with him and made him his heir apparent and bade the folk swear fealty to him. When this reached his brother Bahluwan and he was aware that his younger brother had by favor been preferred over him, his breast was straitened and the affair was sore to him and envy entered into him and hate; but he hid this in his heart, while fire raged therein because of the damsel and the dominion. Meanwhile Shah Khatun went in bridal splendor to the king's son and conceived by him and bare a son, as he were the illuming moon. When Bahluwan saw this betide his brother, envy and jealousy overcame him; so he went in one night to his father's palace and coming to his brother's chamber, saw the nurse sleeping at the door, with the cradle before her and therein his brother's child asleep. Bahluwan stood by him and fell to looking upon his face, whose radiance was as that of the moon, and Satan insinuated himself into his heart, so that he bethought himself and said, "Why be not this babe mine? Verily, I am worthier

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of him than my brother; yea, and of the damsel and the dominion." Then the idea got the mastery of him and anger drove him, so that he took out a knife and setting it to the child's gullet, cut his throat and would have severed his windpipe. So he left him for dead, and entering his brother's chamber, saw him asleep, with the Princess by his side, and thought to slay her, but said to himself, "I will leave the girl-wife for myself." Then he went up to his brother and cutting his throat, parted head from body, after which he left him and went away. But now the world was straitened upon him and his life was a light matter to him and he sought the lodging of his sire Sulayman Shah, that he might slay him also, but could not get admission to him. So he went forth from the palace and hid himself in the city till the morrow, when he repaired to one of his father's fortalices and therein fortified himself. On this wise it was with him; but as regards the nurse, she presently awoke that she might give the child suck, and seeing the cradle running with blood, cried out; whereupon the sleepers started up and the king was aroused and making for the place, found the child with his throat cut and the bed running over with blood and his father dead with a slit weasand in his sleeping chamber. They examined the child and found life in him and his windpipe whole and they sewed up the place of the wound: then the king sought his son Bahluwan, but found him not and saw that he had fled; so he knew that it was he who had done this deed, and this was grievous to the king and to the people of his realm and to the lady Shah Khatun. Thereupon the king laid out his son Malik Shah and buried him and made him a mighty funeral and they mourned with passing sore mourning; after which he applied himself to rearing the infant. As for Bahluwan, when he fled and fortified himself, his power waxed amain and there remained for him but to make war upon his father, who had cast his fondness upon the child and used to rear him on his knees and supplicate Almighty Allah that he might live, so he might commit the command to him. When he came to five years of age, the king

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mounted him on horseback and the people of the city rejoiced in him and prayed for him length of life, that he might take vengeance for his father and heal his grandsire's heart. Meanwhile, Bahluwan the rebel addressed himself to pay court to Cæsar, king of the Roum and crave aid of him in debelling his father, and he inclined unto him and gave him a numerous army. His sire the king hearing of this sent to Cæsar, saying, "O glorious king of might illustrious, succor not an evil doer. This is my son and he hath done so and so and cut his brother's throat and that of his brother's son in the cradle." But he told not the king of the Roum that the child had recovered and was alive. When Cæsar heard the truth of the matter, it was grievous to him as grievous could be, and he sent back to Sulayman Shah, saying, "An it be thy wish, O king, I will cut off his head and send it to thee." But he made answer, saying, "I care naught for him: soon and surely the reward of his deed and his crimes shall overtake him, if not to-day, then to-morrow." And from that date he continued to exchange letters and presents with Cæsar. Now the king of the Roum heard tell of the widowed Princess and of the beauty and loveliness wherewith she was endowed, wherefore his heart clave to her and he sent to seek her in wedlock of Sulayman Shah, who could not refuse him. So he arose and going in to Shah Khatun, said to her, "O my daughter, the king of the Roum hath sent to me to seek thee in marriage. What sayest thou?" She wept and replied, "O king, how canst thou find it in thy heart to address me thus? As for me, abideth there husband for me, after the son of my uncle?" Rejoined the king, "O my daughter, 'tis indeed as thou sayest; but here let us look to the issues of affairs. I must now take compt of death, for that I am a man shot in years and fear not save for thee and thy little son; and indeed I have written to the king of the Roum and others of the kings and said, His uncle slew him, and said not that he hath recovered and is living, but concealed his affair. Now the king of the Roum hath sent to demand thee in marriage, and this is no thing to be refused and fain would we have our back

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strengthened with him." And she was silent and spake not. So King Sulayman Shah made answer to Cæsar with "Hearing and obeying." Then he arose and dispatched her to him, and Cæsar went in to her and found her passing the description wherewith they had described her; wherefore he loved her every day more and more and preferred her over all his women and his affection for Sulayman Shah was increased; but Shah Katun's heart still clave to her child and she could say naught. As for Sulayman Shah's son, the rebel Bahluwan, when he saw that Shah Khatun had married the king of the Roum, this was grievous to him and he despaired of her. Meanwhile, his father Sulayman Shah watched over the child and cherished him and named him Malik Shah, after the name of his sire. When he reached the age of ten, he made the folk do homage to him and appointed him his heir apparent, and after some days, the old king's time for paying the debt of nature drew near and he died. Now a party of the troops had banded themselves together for Bahluwan; so they sent to him, and bringing him privily, went in to the little Malik Shah and seized him and seated his uncle Bahluwan on the throne of kingship. Then they proclaimed him king and did homage to him all, saying, "Verily, we desire thee and deliver to thee the throne of kingship; but we wish of thee that thou slay not thy brother's son, because we are still bounden by the oaths we swore to his sire and his grandsire and the covenants we made with them." So Bahluwan granted this to them and imprisoned the boy in an underground dungeon and straitened him. Presently, the grievous news reached his mother and this was to her a fresh grief; but she could not speak and committed her affair to Allah Almighty, for that she durst not name this to King Cæsar her spouse, lest she should make her uncle King Sulayman Shah a liar. But as regards Buhlawan the Rebel, he abode king in his father's place and his affairs prospered, while young Malik Shah lay in the souterrain four full-told years, till his favor faded and his charms changed. When He (extolled and exalted be He!) willed to relieve him and to bring him forth

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of the prison, Bahluwan sat one day with his chief Officers and the Lords of his land and discoursed with them of the story of his sire, King Sulayman Shah and what was in his heart. Now there were present certain Wazirs, men of worth, and they said to him, "O king, verily Allah hath been bountiful to thee and hath brought thee to thy wish, so that thou art become king in thy father's palace and hast won whatso thou wishedst. But, as for this youth, there is no guilt in him, because he, from the day of his coming into the world, hath seen neither ease nor pleasure, and indeed his favor is faded and his charms changed. What is his crime that he should merit such pains and penalties? Indeed, others than he were to blame, and hereto Allah hath given thee the victory over them, and there is no fault in this poor lad." Quoth Bahluwan, "Verily, 'tis as ye say; but I fear his machinations and am not safe from his mischief; haply the most part of the folk will incline unto him." They replied, "O king, what is this boy, and what power hath he? An thou fear him, send him to one of the frontiers." And Bahluwan said, "Ye speak sooth; so we will send him as captain of war to reduce one of the outlying stations." Now over against the place in question was a host of enemies, hard of heart, and in this he designed the slaughter of the youth: so he bade bring him forth of the underground dungeon and caused him draw near to him and saw his case. Then he robed him, whereat the folk rejoiced, and bound for him the banners and, giving him a mighty many, dispatched him to the quarter aforesaid, whither all who went or were slain or were taken. Accordingly Malik Shah fared thither with his force and when it was one of the days, behold, the enemy attacked them in the night; whereupon some of his men fled and the rest the enemy captured; and they seized Malik Shah also and cast him into a pit with a company of his men. His fellows mourned over his beauty and loveliness and there he abode a whole twelve-month in the evilest plight. Now at the beginning of every year it was the enemy's wont to bring forth their prisoners and cast them down from the top of

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the citadel to the bottom; so at the customed time they brought them forth and cast them down, and Malik Shah with them. However, he fell upon the other men and the ground touched him not, for his term was God-guarded. But those who were cast down there were slain upon the spot and their bodies ceased not to lie there till the wild beasts ate them and the winds scattered their bones. Malik Shah abode strown in his place and aswoon, all that day and that night, and when he revived and found himself safe and sound, he thanked Allah the Most High for his safety and, rising, left the place. He gave not over walking, unknowing whither he went and dieting upon the leaves of the trees; and by day he hid himself where he might and fared on at hazard all the night; and thus he did for some days, till he came to a populous part and seeing folk there, accosted them. He acquainted them with his case, giving them to know that he had been prisoned in the fortress and that they had thrown him down, but Almighty Allah had saved him and brought him off alive. The people had ruth on him and gave him to eat and drink and he abode with them several days; then he questioned them of the way that led to the kingdom of his uncle Bahluwan, but told them not that he was his father's brother. So they showed him the road and he ceased not to go barefoot, till he drew near his uncle's capital, naked, and hungry, and indeed his limbs were lean and his color changed. He sat down at the city gate, when behold, up came a company of King Bahluwan's chief officers, who were out a-hunting and wished to water their horses. They lighted down to rest and the youth accosted them saying, "I would ask you of somewhat that ye may acquaint me therewith." Quoth they, "Ask what thou wilt"; and quoth he, "Is King Bahluwan well?" They derided him and replied, "What a fool art thou, O youth! Thou art a stranger and a beggar, and whence art thou that thou shouldst question concerning the king?" Cried he, "In very sooth, he is my uncle"; whereat they marveled and said, "'Twas one catch-question and now 'tis become two." Then said they to him, "O youth, it is as if

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thou wert Jinn-mad. Whence comest thou to claim kinship with the king? Indeed, we know not that he hath any kith and kin save a nephew, a brother's son, who was prisoned with him, and he dispatched him to wage war upon the infidels, so that they slew him." Said Malik Shah, "I am he and they slew me not, but there befell me this and that." They knew him forthwith and rising to him, kissed his hands and rejoiced in him and said to him, "O our lord, thou art indeed a king and the son of a king, and we desire thee naught but good and we pray for thy continuance. Look how Allah hath rescued thee from this wicked uncle, who sent thee to a place whence none ever came off safe and sound, purposing not in this but thy destruction; and indeed thou fellest upon death from which Allah delivered thee. How, then, wilt thou return and cast thyself again into thine foeman's hand? By Allah, save thyself and return not to him this second time. Haply thou shalt abide upon the face of the earth till it please Almighty Allah to receive thee; but, an thou fall again into his hand, he will not suffer thee to live a single hour." The Prince thanked them and said to them, "Allah reward you with all weal, for indeed ye give me loyal counsel; but whither would ye have me wend?" Quoth they, "To the land of the Roum, the abiding-place of thy mother." "But," quoth he, "my grandfather Sulayman Shah, when the king of the Roum wrote to him demanding my mother in marriage, hid my affair and secreted my secret; and she hath done the same, and I cannot make her a liar." Rejoined they, "Thou sayest sooth, but we desire thine advantage, and even wert thou to take service with the folk, 'twere a means of thy continuance." Then each and every of them brought out to him money and gave him a modicum and clad him and fed him and fared on with him the length of a parasang, till they brought him far from the city, and letting him know that he was safe, departed from him, while he journeyed till he came forth of his uncle's reign and entered the dominion of the Roum. Then he made a village and taking up his abode therein, applied himself to serving one there in earing and seeding and

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the like. As for his mother, Shah Khatun, great was her longing for her child and she thought of him ever and news of him was cut off from her, so her life was troubled and she forswore sleep and could not make mention of him before King Cæsar her spouse. Now she had a Eunuch who had come with her from the court of her uncle King Sulayman Shah, and he was intelligent, quick-witted, right-reded. So she took him apart one day and said to him, shedding tears the while, "Thou hast been my Eunuch from my childhood to this day; canst thou not therefore get me tidings of my son, seeing that I cannot speak of his matter?" He replied, "O my lady, this is an affair which thou hast concealed from the commencement, and were thy son here, 'twould not be possible for thee to entertain him, lest thine honor be smirched with the king; for they would never credit thee, since the news hath been bruited abroad that thy son was slain by his uncle." Quoth she, "The case is even as thou sayest and thou speakest sooth; but, provided I know that my son is alive, let him be in these parts pasturing sheep and let me not sight him nor he sight me." He asked, "How shall we manage in this matter?" and she answered, "Here be my treasures and my wealth: take all thou wilt and bring me my son or else tidings of him." Then they devised a device between them, which was that they should feign some business in their own country, to wit that she had wealth there buried from the time of her husband, Malik Shah, and that none knew of it but this Eunuch who was with her, so it behooved him to go fetch it. Accordingly she acquainted the king her husband with that and sought his permit for the Eunuch to fare: and the king granted him leave of absence for the journey and charged him devise a device, lest he come to grief. The Eunuch, therefore, disguised himself in merchant's habit and repairing to Bahluwan's city, began to make espial concerning the youth's case; whereupon they told him that he had been prisoned in a souterrain and that his uncle had released him and dispatched him to such a place, where they had slain him. When the Eunuch heard this, the mishap was grievous to

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him and his breast was straitened and he knew not what to do. It chanced one day of the days that a certain of the horsemen, who had fallen in with the young Malik Shah by the water and clad him and given him spending-money, saw the Eunuch in the city, habited as a merchant, and recognizing him, questioned him of his case and of the cause of his coming. Quoth he, "I came to sell merchandise"; and quoth the horseman, "I will tell thee somewhat, an thou canst keep it secret." Answered the Eunuch, "That I can! What is it?" and the other said, "We met the king's son, Malik Shah, I and sundry of the Arabs who were with me, and saw him by such a water and gave him spending-money and sent him toward the land of the Roum, near his mother, for that we feared for him lest his uncle Bahluwan slay him." Then he told him all that had passed between them, whereat the Eunuch's countenance changed and he said to the cavalier "Thou art safe!" The knight replied, "Thou also art safe though thou come in quest of him." And the Eunuch rejoined, saying, "Truly, that is my errand: there is no rest for his mother, lying down or rising up, and she hath sent me to seek news of him." Quoth the cavalier, "Go in safety, for he is in a quarter of the land of the Roum, even as I said to thee." The Eunuch thanked him and blessed him and mounting, returned upon his road, following the trail, while the knight rode with him to a certain highway, when he said to him, "This is where we left him." Then he took leave of him and returned to his own city, while the Eunuch fared on along the road, inquiring in every village he entered of the youth, by the description which the rider had given him, and he ceased not thus to do till he came to the village wherein was young Malik Shah. So he entered, and dismounting, made inquiry after the Prince, but none gave him news of him; whereat he abode perplexed concerning his affair and made ready to depart. Accordingly he mounted his horse; but, as he passed through the village, he saw a cow bound with a rope and a youth asleep by her side, hending the halter in hand; so he looked at him and passed on and heeded him not in his

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heart, but presently he halted and said to himself, "An the youth whom I am questing have become the like of this sleeping youth whom I passed but now, how shall I know him? Alas, the length of my travail and travel! How shall I go about in search of a somebody I know not, one whom, if I saw him face to face I should not know?" So saying he turned back, musing anent that sleeping youth, and coming to him, he still sleeping, dismounted from his mare and sat down by his side. He fixed his eyes upon his face and considered him a while and said in himself, "For aught I wot, this youth may be Malik Shah"; then he began hemming and saying, "Hark ye, O youth!" Whereupon the sleeper awoke and sat up; and the Eunuch asked him, "Who be thy father in this village and where be thy dwelling?" The youth sighed and replied, "I am a stranger"; and quoth the Eunuch, "From what land art thou and who is thy sire?" Quoth the other, "I am from such a land," and the Eunuch ceased not to question him and he to answer his queries, till he was certified of him and knew him. So he arose and embraced him and kissed him and wept over his case: he also told him that he was wandering about in search of him and informed him that he was come privily from the king, his mother's husband, and that his mother would be satisfied to weet that he was alive and well, though she saw him not. Then he re-entered the village and buying the Prince a horse, mounted him, and they ceased not going till they came to the frontier of their own country, where there fell robbers upon them by the way and took all that was with them and pinioned them; after which they threw them into a pit hard by the road and went their ways and left them to die there; and indeed they had cast many folk into that pit and they had perished. The Eunuch fell a weeping in the pit and the youth said to him, "What is this weeping and what shall it profit here?" Quoth the Eunuch, "I weep not for fear of death, but of ruth for thee and the cursedness of thy case and because of thy mother's heart and for that which thou hast suffered of horrors and that thy death should be this ignoble death,

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after the endurance of all manner of dire distresses." But the youth said, "That which hath betided me was writ to me and that which is written none hath power to efface; and if my life-term be advanced, none may defer it." Then the twain passed that night and the following day and the next night and the next day in the hollow, till they were weak with hunger and came nigh upon death and could but groan feebly. Now it fortuned by the decree of Almighty Allah and His destiny, that Cæsar, king of the Greeks, the spouse of Malik Shah's mother Shah Khatun, went forth a-hunting that morning. He flushed a head of game, he and his company, and chased it, till they came up with it by that pit, whereupon one of them lighted down from his horse, to slaughter it, hard by the mouth of the hollow. He heard a sound of low moaning from the sole of the pit; whereat he arose and mounting his horse, waited till the troops were assembled. Then he acquainted the king with this and he bade one of his servants descend into the hollow; so the man climbed down and brought out the youth and the Eunuch in fainting condition. They cut their pinion-bonds and poured wine down their throats, till they came to themselves, when the king looked at the Eunuch and recognizing him, said, "Harkye, Such-an-one!" The Eunuch replied, "Yes, O my lord the king," and prostrated himself to him; whereat the king wondered with exceeding wonder and asked him, "How camest thou to this place and what hath befallen thee?" The Eunuch answered, "I went and took out the treasure and brought it thus far; but the evil eye was behind me and I unknowing. So the thieves took us alone here and seized the money and cast us into this pit that we might die the slow death of hunger, even as they had done with others; but Allah the Most High sent thee, in pity to us." The king marveled, he and his, and praised the Lord for that he had come thither; after which he turned to the Eunuch and said to him, "What is this youth thou hast with thee?" He replied, "O king, this is the son of a nurse who belonged to us and we left him when he was a little one. I saw him to-day and his mother said to me, 'Take him with thee': so

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this morning I brought him that he might be a servant to the king, for that he is an adroit youth and a clever." Then the king fared on, he and his company, and with them the Eunuch and the youth, who questioned his companion of Bahluwan and his dealing with his subjects, and he replied, saying, "As thy head liveth, O my lord the king, the folk are in sore annoy with him and not one of them wisheth a sight of him, be they high or low." When the king returned to his palace, he went in to his wife Shah Khatun and said to her, "I give thee the glad tidings of thine Eunuch's return"; and he told her what had betided and of the youth whom he had brought with him. When she heard this, her wits fled and she would have screamed, but her reason restrained her, and the king said to her, "What is this? Art thou overcome with grief for the loss of the moneys or for that which hath befallen the Eunuch?" Said she, "Nay, as thy head liveth, O king! but women are weaklings." Then came the Eunuch and going in to her, told her all that had happened to him and also acquainted her with her son's case and with that which he had suffered of distresses and how his uncle had exposed him to slaughter, and he had been taken prisoner and they had cast him into the pit and hurled him from the highmost of the citadel and how Allah had delivered him from these perils, all of them; and whilst he recounted to her all this, she wept. Then she asked him, "When the king saw him and questioned thee of him, what was it thou saidst him?" and he answered, "I said to him: "This is the son of a nurse who belonged to us. We left him a little one and he grew up; so I brought him, that he might be servant to the king." Cried she, "Thou didst well"; and she charged him to serve the Prince with faithful service. As for the king, he redoubled in kindness to the Eunuch and appointed the youth a liberal allowance and the abode going in to and coming out of the king's house and standing in his service, and every day he waxed better with him. As for Shah Khatun, she used to station herself at watch for him at the windows and in the balconies

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and gaze upon him, and she frying on coals of fire on his account; yet could she not speak. In such condition she abode a long while and indeed yearning for him was killing her; so she stood and watched for him one day at the door of her chamber and straining him to her bosom, bussed him on the breast and kissed him on either cheek. At this moment, behold, out came the major-domo of the king's household and seeing her embracing the youth, started in amazement. Then he asked to whom that chamber belonged and was answered, "To Shah Khatun, wife of the king," whereupon he turned back, quaking as one smitten by a leven-bolt. The king saw him in a tremor and said to him, "Out on thee! what is the matter?" Said he, "O king, what matter can be more grievous than that which I see?" Asked the king, "What seest thou?" and the officer answered, "I see that the youth, who came with the Eunuch, was not brought with him save on account of Shah Khatun; for I passed but now by her chamber door, and she was standing, watching; and when the youth came up, she rose to him and clipped him and kissed him on his cheek." When the king heard this, he bowed his head amazed, perplexed, and sinking into a seat, clutched at his beard and shook it till he came nigh upon plucking it out. Then he arose forthright and laid hands on the youth and clapped him in jail; he also took the Eunuch and cast them both into a souterrain under his palace. After this he went in to Shah Khatun and said to her, "Brava, by Allah, O daughter of nobles. O thou whom kings sought to wed, for the purity of thy repute and the fairness of the fame of thee! How seemly is thy semblance! Now may Allah curse her whose inward contrarieth her outward, after the likeness of thy base favor, whose exterior is handsome and its interior fulsome, face fair and deeds foul! Verily, I mean to make of thee and of yonder ne'er-do-well an example among the lieges, for that thou sentest not thine Eunuch but of intent on his account, so that he took him and brought him into my palace and thou hast trampled my head with him; and this is none other than exceeding boldness; but thou shalt see what

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I will do with you all." So saying, he spat in her face and went out from her; while Shah Khatun said nothing, well knowing that, an she spoke at that time, he would not credit her speech. Then she humbled herself in supplication to Allah Almighty and said, "O God the Great, Thou knowest the things by secrecy ensealed and their outwards revealed and their inwards concealed! If an advanced life-term be appointed to me, let it not be deferred, and if a deferred one, let it not be advanced!" On this wise she passed some days, while the king fell into bewilderment and foreswore meat and drink and sleep, and abode knowing not what he should do and saying to himself, "An I slay the Eunuch and the youth, my soul will not be solaced, for they are not to blame, seeing that she sent to fetch him, and my heart careth not to kill them all three. But I will not be hasty in doing them die, for that I fear repentance." Then he left them, so he might look into the affair. Now he had a nurse, a foster-mother, on whose knees he had been reared, and she was a woman of understanding and suspected him, yet dared not question him. So she went in to Shah Khatun and finding her in yet sadder plight than he, asked her what was to do; but she refused to answer. However, the nurse gave not over coaxing and questioning her, till she swore her to concealment. Accordingly, the old woman made oath that she would keep secret all that she should say to her, whereupon the queen to her related her history, first and last, and told her that the youth was her son. With this the old woman prostrated herself before her and said to her, "This is a right easy matter." But the queen replied, "By Allah, O my mother, I prefer my destruction and that of my son to defending myself by a plea which they will not believe; for they will say: She pleadeth this only that she may fend off shame from herself. And naught will profit me save long-suffering." The old woman was moved by her speech and her wisdom and said to her, "Indeed, O my daughter, 'tis as thou sayest, and I hope in Allah that He will show forth the truth. Have patience and I will presently go in to the king and hear his words and machinate

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somewhat in this matter, Inshallah!" Thereupon the ancient dame arose and going in to the king, found him with his head between his knees in sore pain of sorrow. She sat down by him a while and bespoke him with soft words and said to him, "Indeed, O my son, thou consumest my vitals, for that these many days thou hast not mounted horse, and thou grievest and I know not what aileth thee." He replied, "O my mother, all is due to yonder accursed, of whom I deemed so well and who hath done this and that." Then he related to her the whole story from beginning to end, and she cried to him, "This thy chagrin is on account of a no-better-than-she-should-be!" Quoth he, "I was but considering by what death I should slay them, so the folk may take warning and repent." And quoth she, "O my son, 'ware precipitance, for it gendereth repentance and the slaying of them shall not escape thee. When thou art assured of this affair, do whatso thou willest." He rejoined, "O my mother, there needeth no assurance anent him for whom she dispatched her Eunuch and he fetched him." But she retorted, "There is a thing wherewith we will make her confess, and all that is in her heart shall be discovered to thee." Asked the king, "What is that?" and she answered, "I will bring thee the heart of a hoopoe, which, when she sleepeth, do thou lay upon her bosom and question her of everything thou wouldst know, and she will discover the same unto thee and show forth the truth to thee." The king rejoiced in this and said to his nurse, "Hasten thou and let none know of thee." So she arose and going in to the queen, said to her, "I have done thy business and 'tis as follows: This night the king will come in to thee and do thou seem asleep; and if he ask thee of aught, do thou answer him, as if in thy sleep." The queen thanked her and the old dame went away and fetching the bird's heart, gave it to the king. Hardly was the night come, when he went in to his wife and found her lying back, a-slumbering; so he sat down by her side and laying the hoopoe's heart on her breast, waited awhile, so he might be assured that she slept. Then said he to her, "Shah Khatun, Shah Khatun, is

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this my reward from thee?" Quoth she, "What offense have I committed?" and quoth he, "What offense can be greater than this? Thou sentest after yonder youth and broughtest him hither, on account of thy wicked desire." Said she, "This youth is my son and a piece of my heart; and of my longing and affection for him, I could not contain myself, but sprang upon him and kissed him." When the king heard this, he was dazed and amazed and said to her, "Hast thou a proof that this youth is thy son? Indeed, I have a letter from thine uncle King Sulayman Shah, informing me that his uncle Bahluwan cut his throat." Said she, "Yes, he did indeed cut his throat, but severed not the windpipe; so my uncle sewed up the wound and reared him, for that his life-term was not come." When the king heard this, he said, "This proof sufficeth me," and rising forthright in the night, bade bring the youth and the Eunuch. Then he examined his stepson's throat with a candle and saw the scar where it had been cut from ear to ear, and indeed the place had healed up and it was like a thread stretched out. Thereupon the king fell down prostrate before Allah, who had delivered the prince from all these perils and from the distresses he had suffered, and rejoiced with joy exceeding because he had delayed and had not made haste to slay him, in which case mighty sore repentance had betided him.

Devasmitá

From the Sanskrit

THERE is a city in the world famous under the name of Támraliptá, and in that city there was a very rich merchant named Dhanadatta. And he, being childless, assembled many Bráhmans and said to them with due respect, "Take such steps as will procure me a son soon." Then those Bráhmans said to him: "This is not at all difficult, for Bráhmans can accomplish all things in this world by

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means of ceremonies in accordance with the Scriptures. To give you an instance, there was in old times a king who had no sons, and he had a hundred and five wives in his harem. And by means of a sacrifice to procure a son, there was born to him a son named Jantu, who was like the rising of the new moon to the eyes of his wives. Once on a time an ant bit the boy on the thigh as he was crawling about on his knees, so that he was very unhappy and sobbed loudly. Thereupon the whole harem was full of confused lamentation, and the king himself shrieked out 'My son! my son!' like a common man. The boy was soon comforted, the ant having been removed, and the king blamed the misfortune of his only having one son as the cause of all his grief. And he asked the Bráhmans in his affliction if there was any expedient by which he might obtain a large number of children. They answered him, 'O king, there is one expedient open to you; you must slay this son and offer up all his flesh in the fire. By smelling the smell of that sacrifice all thy wives will obtain sons.' When he heard that, the king had the whole ceremony performed as they directed; and he obtained as many sons as he had wives. So we can obtain a son for you also by a burnt-offering." When they had said this to Dhanadatta, the Bráhmans, after a sacrificial fee had been promised them, performed a sacrifice: then a son was born to that merchant. That son was called Guhasena, and he gradually grew up to man's estate. Then his father Dhanadatta began to look out for a wife for him.

Then his father went with that son of his to another country, on the pretense of traffic, but really to get a daughter-in-law. There he asked an excellent merchant of the name of Dharmagupta to give him his daughter named Devasmitá for his son Guhasena. But Dharmagupta, who was tenderly attached to his daughter, did not approve of that connection, reflecting that the city of Támraliptá was very far off. But when Devasmitá beheld that Guhasena, her mind was immediately attracted by his virtues, and she was set on abandoning her relations, and so she made an

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assignation with him by means of a confidante, and went away from that country at night with her beloved and his father. When they reached Támraliptá they were married, and the minds of the young couple were firmly knit together by the bond of mutual love. Then Guhasena's father died, and he himself was urged by his relations to go to the country of Kaṭáha for the purpose of trafficking; but his wife Devasmitá was too jealous to approve of that expedition, fearing exceedingly that he would be attracted by some other lady. Then, as his wife did not approve of it, and his relations kept inciting him to it, Guhasena, whose mind was firmly set on doing his duty, was bewildered. Then he went and performed a vow in the temple of the god, observing a rigid fast, trusting that the god would show him some way out of his difficulty. And his wife Devasmitá also performed a vow with him; then Śiva was pleased to appear to that couple in a dream; and giving them two red lotuses the god said to them, "Take each of you one of these lotuses in your hand. And if either of you shall be unfaithful during your separation, the lotus in the hand of the other shall fade, but not otherwise." After hearing this, the two woke up, and each beheld in the hand of the other a red lotus, and it seemed as if they had got one another's hearts. Then Guhasena set out, lotus in hand, but Devasmitá remained in the house with her eyes fixed upon her flower. Guhasena for his part quickly reached the country of Kaṭáha, and began to buy and sell jewels there. And four young merchants in that country, seeing that that unfading lotus was ever in his hand, were greatly astonished. Accordingly they got him to their house by an artifice, and made him drink a great deal of wine, and then asked him the history of the lotus, and he being intoxicated told them the whole story. Then those four young merchants, knowing that Guhasena would take a long time to complete his sales and purchases of jewels and other wares, planned together, like rascals as they were, the seduction of his wife out of curiosity, and eager to accomplish it set out quickly for Támraliptá without their departure being noticed.

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There they cast about for some instrument, and at last had recourse to a female ascetic of the name of Yogakarandiká, who lived in a sanctuary of Buddha; and they said to her in an affectionate manner, "Reverend madam, if our object is accomplished by your help, we will give you much wealth." She answered them: "No doubt, you young men desire some woman in this city, so tell me all about it, I will procure you the object of your desire, but I have no wish for money; I have a pupil of distinguished ability named Siddhikarí; owing to her kindness I have obtained untold wealth." The young merchants asked, "How have you obtained untold wealth by the assistance of a pupil?" Being asked this question, the female ascetic said, "If you feel any curiosity about the matter, listen, my sons, I will tell you the whole story.

STORY OF THE CUNNING SIDDHIKARÍ

"Long ago a certain merchant came here from the north; while he was dwelling here, my pupil went and obtained, with a treacherous object, the position of a serving-maid in his house, having first altered her appearance, and after she had gained the confidence of that merchant, she stole all his hoard of gold from his house, and went off secretly in the morning twilight. And as she went out from the city moving rapidly through fear, a certain Domba with his drum in his hand, saw her, and pursued her at full speed with the intention of robbing her. When she had reached the foot of a Nyagrodha tree, she saw that he had come up with her, and so the cunning Siddhikarí said this to him in a plaintive manner, "I have had a jealous quarrel with my husband, and I have left his house to die, therefore my good man, make a noose for me to hang myself with." Then the Domba thought, "Let her hang herself, why should I be guilty of her death, especially as she is a woman?" and so he fastened a noose for her to the tree. Then Siddhikarí, feigning ignorance, said to the Domba, "How is the noose

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slipped round the neck? show me, I entreat you." Then the Domba placed the drum under his feet, and saying, "This is the way we do the trick," he fastened the noose round his own throat; Siddhikarí for her part smashed the drum to atoms with a kick, and that Domba hung till he was dead. At that moment the merchant arrived in search of her, and beheld from a distance Siddhikarí, who had stolen from him untold treasures, at the foot of the tree. She, too, saw him coming, and climbed up the tree without being noticed, and remained there on a bough, having her body concealed by the dense foliage. When the merchant came up with his servants, he saw the Domba hanging by his neck, but Siddhikarí was nowhere to be seen. Immediately one of his servants said, "I wonder whether she has got up this tree," and proceeded to ascend it himself. Then Siddhikarí said, "I have always loved you, and now you have climbed up where I am, so all this wealth is at your disposal, handsome man, come and embrace me." So she embraced the merchant's servant, and as she was kissing his mouth, she bit off the fool's tongue. He, overcome with the pain, fell from that tree spitting blood from his mouth, uttering some indistinct syllables, which sounded like Lalalla. When he saw that, the merchant was terrified, and supposing that his servant had been seized by a demon, he fled from that place, and went to his own house with his attendants. Then Siddhikarí the female ascetic, equally frightened, descended from the top of the tree, and brought home with her all that wealth. Such a person is my pupil, distinguished for her great discernment, and it is in this way, my sons, that I have obtained wealth by her kindness."

When she had said this to the young merchants, the female ascetic showed to them her pupil who happened to come in at that moment, and said to them, "Now, my sons, tell me the real state of affairs—what woman do you desire? I will quickly procure her for you." When they heard that they said, "Procure us an interview with the wife of the merchant Guhasena named Devasmitá." When she heard that, the ascetic undertook to manage that busi-

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ness for them, and she gave those young merchants her own house to reside in. Then she gratified the servants at Guhasena's house with gifts of sweetmeats and other things, and afterwards entered it with her pupil. Then, as she approached the private rooms of Devasmitá, a hound, that was fastened there with a chain, would not let her come near, but opposed her entrance in the most determined way. Then Devasmitá seeing her, of her own accord sent a maid, and had her brought in, thinking to herself, "What can this person be come for?" After she had entered, the wicked ascetic gave Devasmitá her blessing, and, treating the virtuous woman with affected respect, said to her, "I have always had a desire to see you, but to-day I saw you in a dream, therefore I have come to visit you with impatient eagerness; and my mind is afflicted at beholding you separated from your husband, for beauty and youth are wasted when one is deprived of the society of one's beloved." With this and many other speeches of the same kind she tried to gain the confidence of the virtuous woman in a short interview, and then taking leave of her she returned to her own house. On the second day she took with her a piece of meat full of pepper dust, and went again to the house of Devasmitá, and there she gave that piece of meat to the hound at the door, and the hound gobbled it up, pepper and all. Then owing to the pepper dust, the tears flowed in profusion from the animal's eyes, and her nose began to run. And the cunning ascetic immediately went into the apartment of Devasmitá, who received her hospitably, and began to cry. When Devasmitá asked her why she shed tears, she said with affected reluctance: "My friend, look at this hound weeping outside here. This creature recognized me to-day as having been its companion in a former birth, and began to weep; for that reason my tears gushed through pity." When she heard that, and saw that hound outside apparently weeping, Devasmitá thought for a moment to herself, "What can be the meaning of this wonderful sight?" Then the ascetic said to her, "My daughter, in a former birth, I and that hound were the two wives of a certain

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Bráhman. And our husband frequently went about to other countries on embassies by order of the king. Now while he was away from home, I lived at my good will and pleasure, and so did not cheat the elements, of which I was composed, and my senses, of their lawful enjoyment. For considerate treatment of the elements and senses is held to be the highest duty. Therefore I have been born in this birth with a recollection of my former existence. But she, in her former life, through ignorance, confined all her attention to the preservation of her character, therefore she has been degraded and born again as one of the canine race, however, she too remembers her former birth." The wise Devasmitá said to herself, "This is a novel conception of duty; no doubt this woman has laid a treacherous snare for me"; and so she said to her, "Reverend lady, for this long time I have been ignorant of this duty, so procure me an interview with some charming man." Then the ascetic said, "There are residing here some young merchants that have come from another country, so I will bring them to you." When she had said this, the ascetic returned home delighted, and Devasmitá of her own accord said to her maids: "No doubt those scoundrelly young merchants, whoever they may be, have seen that unfading lotus in the hand of my husband, and have on some occasion or other, when he was drinking wine, asked him out of curiosity to tell the whole story of it, and have now come here from that island to deceive me, and this wicked ascetic is employed by them. So bring quickly some wine mixed with Datura, and when you have brought it, have a dog's foot of iron made as quickly as possible." When Devasmitá had given these orders, the maids executed them faithfully, and one of the maids, by her orders, dressed herself up to resemble her mistress. The ascetic for her part chose out of the party of four merchants (each of whom in his eagerness said — "Let me go first" —) one individual, and brought him with her. And concealing him in the dress of her pupil, she introduced him in the evening into the house of Devasmitá, and coming out, disappeared. Then that

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maid, who was disguised as Devasmitá, courteously persuaded the young merchant to drink some of that wine drugged with Datura. That liquor, like his own immodesty, robbed him of his senses, and then the maids took away his clothes and other equipments and left him stark naked; then they branded him on the forehead with the mark of a dog's foot, and during the night took him and pushed him into a ditch full of filth. Then he recovered consciousness in the last watch of the night, and found himself plunged in a ditch, as it were the hell *Avíchi* assigned to him by his sins. Then he got up and washed himself and went to the house of the female ascetic, in a state of misery, feeling with his fingers the mark on his forehead. And when he got there, he told his friends that he had been robbed on the way, in order that he might not be the only person made ridiculous. And the next morning he sat with a cloth wrapped round his branded forehead, giving as an excuse that he had a headache from keeping awake so long, and drinking too much. In the same way the next young merchant was maltreated, when he got to the house of Devasmitá, and when he returned home stripped, he said, "I put on my ornaments there, and as I was coming out I was plundered by robbers." In the morning he also, on the plea of a headache, put a wrapper on to cover his branded forehead.

In the same way all the four young merchants suffered in turns branding and other humiliating treatment, though they concealed the fact. And they went away from the place, without revealing to the female Buddhist ascetic the ill-treatment they had experienced, hoping that she would suffer in a similar way. On the next day the ascetic went with her disciple to the house of Devasmitá, much delighted at having accomplished what she undertook to do. Then Devasmitá received her courteously, and made her drink wine drugged with Datura, offered as a sign of gratitude. When she and her disciple were intoxicated with it, that chaste wife cut off their ears and noses, and flung them also into a filthy pool. And being distressed by the thought that

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perhaps these young merchants might go and slay her husband, she told the whole circumstance to her mother-in-law. Then her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, you have acted nobly, but possibly some misfortune may happen to my son in consequence of what you have done."

So the wise Devasmitá forthwith put on the dress of a merchant. Then she embarked on a ship, on the pretense of a mercantile expedition, and came to the country of Kaṭáha where her husband was. And when she arrived there, she saw that husband of hers, Guhasena, in the midst of a circle of merchants, like consolation in external bodily form. He seeing her afar off in the dress of a man, as it were, drank her in with his eyes, and thought to himself, "Who may this merchant be that looks so like my beloved wife?" So Devasmitá went and represented to the king that she had a petition to make, and asked him to assemble all his subjects. Then the king full of curiosity assembled all the citizens, and said to that lady disguised as a merchant, "What is your petition?" Then Devasmitá said, "There are residing here in your midst four slaves of mine who have escaped, let the king make them over to me." Then the king said to her, "All the citizens are present here, so look at everyone in order to recognize him, and take those slaves of yours." Then she seized upon the four young merchants, whom she had before treated in such a humiliating way in her house, and who had wrappers bound round their heads. Then the merchants, who were there, flew in a passion, and said to her, "These are the sons of distinguished merchants, how then can they be your slaves?" Then she answered them, "If you do not believe what I say, examine their foreheads which I marked with a dog's foot." They consented, and removing the head-wrappers of these four, they all beheld the dog's foot on their foreheads. Then all the merchants were abashed, and the king, being astonished, himself asked Devasmitá what all this meant. She told the whole story, and all the people burst out laughing, and the king said to the lady, "They are your slaves by the best of titles." Then the other mer-

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chants paid a large sum of money to that chaste wife, to redeem those four from slavery, and a fine to the king's treasury. Devasmitá received that money, and recovered her husband, and being honored by all good men, returned then to her own city Támraliptá, and she was never afterwards separated from her beloved.

The Sharpers and the Moneylender

From the Arabic

FOUR sharpers once plotted against a Shroff, a man of much wealth, and agreed upon a sleight for securing some of his coins. So one of them took an ass and laying on it a bag, wherein were dirhams, lighted down at the shop of the Shroff and sought of him small change. The man of moneys brought out to him the silver bits and bartered them with him, whilst the sharper was easy with him in the matter of the exchange, so he might gar him long for more gain. As they were thus, up came the other three sharpers and surrounded the donkey; and one of them said, "'Tis he," and another said, "Wait till I look at him." Then he took to considering the ass and stroking him from crest to tail; whilst the third went up to him and handled him and felt him from head to rump, saying, "Yes, 'tis in him." Said another, "No, 'tis not in him"; and they left not doing the like of this for some time. Then they accosted the donkey's owner and chaffered with him and he said, "I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhams." They offered him a thousand dirhams; but he refused and swore that he would not vend the ass but for that which he had said. They ceased not adding to their offer till the price reached five thousand dirhams, whilst their mate still said, "I'll not vend him save for ten thousand silver pieces." The Shroff advised him to sell, but he would not do this and said to him, "Ho, shaykh! Thou wottest not the case of this

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donkey. Stick to silver and gold and what pertaineth thereto of exchange and small change; because indeed the virtue of this ass is a mystery to thee. For every craft its crafty men and for every means of livelihood its peculiar people." When the affair was prolonged upon the three sharpers, they went away and sat down aside; then they came up privily to the money-changer and said to him, "An thou can buy him for us, do so, and we will give thee twenty dirhams." Quoth he, "Go away and sit down at a distance from him." So they did as he bade and the Shroff went up to the owner of the ass and ceased not luring him with lucre and saying, "Leave these wights and sell me the donkey, and I will reckon him a present from thee," till he sold him the animal for five thousand and five hundred dirhams. Accordingly the money-changer weighed out to him that sum of his own moneys, and the owner of the ass took the price and delivered the beast to him, saying, "Whatso shall betide, though he abide a deposit upon thy neck, sell him not to yonder cheats for less than ten thousand dirhams, for that they would fain buy him because of a hidden hoard they know, whereto naught can guide them save this donkey. So close thy hand on him and cross me not, or thou shalt repent." With these words he left him and went away, whereupon up came the three other sharpers, the comrades of him of the ass, and said to the Shroff, "God requite thee for us with good, in that thou hast bought him! How can we reward thee?" Quoth he, "I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhams." When they heard that they returned to the ass and fell again to examining him like buyers and handling him. Then said they to the money-changer, "Indeed we were deceived in him. This is not the ass we sought and he is not worth to us more than ten nusfs." Then they left him and offered to go away, whereat the Shroff was sore chagrined and cried out at their speech, saying, "O folk, ye asked me to buy him for you and now I have bought him, ye say, we were deceived in him, and he is not worth to us more than ten nusfs." They replied, "We thought that in him was whatso we wanted; but, behold, in

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him is the contrary of that which we wish; and indeed he hath a blemish, for that he is short of back." Then they made long noses at him and went away from him and dispersed. The money-changer deemed they did but play him off, that they might get the donkey at their own price; but, when they walked away from him and he had long awaited their return, he cried out, saying, "Well-away!" and "Ruin!" and "Sorry case I am in!" and shrieked aloud and rent his raiment. So the market-people assembled to him and questioned him of his case; whereupon he acquainted them with his condition and told them what the knaves had said and how they had cozened him and how they had cajoled him into buying an ass worth fifty dirhams for five thousand and five hundred. His friends blamed him and a gathering of the folk laughed at him and admired his folly and over-faith in believing the talk of the sharpers without suspicion, and meddling with that which he understood not and thrusting himself into that whereof he had no sure knowledge.

The Withered Hand

From the Turkish

ONE of the caliphs of the Abassides, named Mutaasid Billah Yansur bi nour Ullah, was a sovereign of great good judgment and careful justice. He one day, in company with his attendants, visited a palace situated on the banks of the Tigris, where he observed an expert fisherman throw his net into the river, and, after hauling it out, found only three or four fish in it. The caliph remarking this, commanded the fisherman to throw it into the water again for his sake, "and let us see," said he, "what my luck will be." The man did as he was ordered, and soon after, hauling his net out, felt something weighty among its meshes. In consequence of the increased weight, the attendants of the caliph had to aid him, and when the net

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was on shore, they found in it a leather bag, tightly bound round the mouth. In this bag they at first perceived a number of tiles, and finally at its bottom the hand of a tender and young girl, bent and shriveled. The caliph, on seeing the hand, exclaimed, "Poor creature, what work is this, that the servants of God (Mussulmans) should be thus cut to pieces and thrown into the river without our knowledge? We must find the committer of this wicked act." Now with the caliph was one of his cadis (judges), who spoke and said, "Oh! Ameer of the Faithful, give your precious self no trouble about this matter, for, by your favor, we will investigate, and with proper care and circumspection bring it to light."

The caliph at the same time called the governor of the city of Baghdad, and giving the bag into his hands, said, "Go to the bazaar, show it to the sack sewers, and inquire whose work it is; they know each other's work; and if you find the individual who sewed it, bring him to me."

The cadi had the sack shown to the sewers, and an old grave-looking man, on seeing it, exclaimed that it was his own work. "Lately I sold it," added he, "and two others, to one Yahiya Ilha, a native of Damascus, of the family of the Mahides." The cadi on hearing this said, "Come with me to the caliph; fear nothing, he has only a few questions to ask you." So the old man accompanied him into the presence of the caliph, who demanded of him to whom he had sold it. The old man answered as before, adding, "Oh, Prince of the Faithful, he is a man of high rank, but very wicked and tyrannical, and continually does injury and vexation to true believers. Everyone fears him, and none dare complain against him to the caliph. Lately a lady, named Inaan Magennee, purchased a female slave for one thousand dinars who was very fair and beautiful, and, moreover, a poetess. This man supposed her mistress would sell her to him, but receiving the lady's reply that she had already given her her freedom, he sent her word that there was to be a wedding in the house, and requested that the female should be loaned him for the occasion.

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The lady, therefore, sent her as a loan for three days, and, after four or five had elapsed, sending to demand her, received for answer that she had already left his house two or three days ago, and notwithstanding the lady's tears and complaints, she could not obtain her slave, nor even hear any news of her.

"The lady, from fear of this man's violence, held her peace, and left the quarter wherein she had resided, for it is said he had already put several of his neighbors to death."

When the old man was done speaking, the caliph seemed greatly rejoiced, and commanded that Yahiya Ilha should forthwith be brought before him. He came, and when he was shown the hand found in the bag his color changed, and he falsely endeavored to exculpate himself. The lady was likewise brought, and so soon as she saw the hand she commenced weeping, and exclaimed, "Yes, indeed, it is the hand of my poor murdered slave." "Speak," said the caliph to the Mahides, "for by my head I swear to know the truth of this affair." So the man acknowledged that he had killed the slave; and the caliph, in consideration of Hasheem,[1] sentenced him to pay to the owner of the slave one thousand pieces of gold for the loss which she had sustained, and one hundred thousand more for the law of retaliation; after which he allowed him three days in which to settle his affairs in the city, and then leave it forever.

On learning this sentence, the public loudly praised the caliph's judgment, and commended his justice and equity.

[1] Beni Hasheem, one of the most ancient Arabian tribes, from which the Prophet descended.—A. T.

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The Melancholist and the Sharper

From the Arabic

THERE was once a Richard hight 'Ajlan, the Hasty, who wasted his wealth, and concern and chagrin got the mastery of him, so that he became a Melancholist and lost his wit. There remained with him of his moneys about twenty dinars and he used to beg alms of the folk, and whatso they gave him in charity he would gather together and add to the gold pieces that were left him. Now there was in that town a Sharper, who made his living by roguery, and he knew that the Melancholist had somewhat of money; so he fell to spying upon him and ceased not watching him till he saw him put into an earthen pot that which he had with him of silvers and enter a deserted ruin, where he sat down, and straightway began to dig a hole, wherein he laid the pot and covering it up, smoothed the ground as it had been. Then he went away and the Sharper came and taking what was in the pot, restored it to its former place. Presently 'Ajlan returned, with somewhat to add to his hoard, but found it not; so he bethought him of who had followed him and remembered that he had found that Sharper assiduous in sitting with him and questioning him. So he went in search of him, assured that he had taken the pot, and gave not over looking for him till he saw him sitting; whereupon he went to him and the Sharper saw him. Then the Melancholist stood within earshot and muttered to himself and said, "In the pot are sixty ducats and I have with me other twenty in such a place and to-day I will unite the whole in the pot." When the Sharper heard him say this to himself, muttering and mumbling, repeating and blundering in his speech, he repented him of having taken the sequins and said, "He will presently return to the pot and find it empty; wherefore that for which I am on the lookout will escape me; and meseemeth 'twere best I replace the dinars, so he may see them and leave all which is with him in the pot,

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and I can take the whole." Now he feared to return to the pot at once, lest the Melancholist should follow him to the place and find nothing and on this wise his arrangements be marred; so he said to him, "O 'Ajlan, I would have thee come to my lodging and eat bread with me." Therefore the Melancholist went with him to his quarters and he seated him there and going to the market, sold somewhat of his clothes and pawned somewhat from his house and bought the best of food. Then he betook himself to the ruin and replacing the money in the pot, buried it again; after which he returned to his lodging and gave the Melancholist to eat and drink, and they went out together. The Sharper walked away and hid himself, lest his guest should see him, while 'Ajlan repaired to his hiding-place and took the pot. Presently the Sharper returned to the ruin, rejoicing in that which he deemed he should get, and dug in the place, but found naught and knew that the Melancholist had outwitted him. So he began buffeting his face for regret, and fell to following the other whitherso he went, to the intent that he might win what was with him, but he failed in this, because the Melancholist knew what was in his mind and was assured that he spied upon him; so he kept watch over himself. Now, had the Sharper considered the consequences of haste and that which is begotten of loss therefrom, he had not done on such wise.

Lakshadatta and Labdhadatta

From the Sanskrit

THERE was on the earth a city named Lakshapura. In it there lived a king named Lakshadatta, chief of generous men. He never knew how to give a petitioner less than a lac of coins, but he gave five lacs to anyone with whom he conversed. As for the man with whom he was pleased, he lifted him out of poverty, for this reason his

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name was called Lakshadatta. A certain dependent named Labdhadatta stood day and night at his gate, with a piece of leather for his only loin-rag. He had matted hair, and he never left the king's gate for a second, day or night, in cold, rain, or heat, and the king saw him there. And, though he remained there long in misery, the king did not give him anything, though he was generous and compassionate.

Then, one day the king went to a forest to hunt, and his dependent followed him with a staff in his hand. There, while the king seated on an elephant, armed with a bow, and followed by his army, slew tigers, bears, and deer, with showers of arrows, his dependent, going in front of him, alone on foot, slew with his staff many boars and deer. When the king saw his bravery, he thought in his heart, "It is wonderful that this man should be such a hero," but he did not give him anything. And the king, when he had finished his hunting, returned home to his city, to enjoy himself, but that dependent stood at his palace-gate as before. Once on a time, Lakshadatta went out to conquer a neighboring king of the same family, and he had a terrible battle. And in the battle the dependent struck down in front of him many enemies, with blows from the end of his strong staff of acacia wood. And the king, after conquering his enemies, returned to his own city, and though he had seen the valor of his dependent, he gave him nothing. In this condition the dependent Labdhadatta remained, and many years passed over his head, while he supported himself with difficulty.

And when the sixth year had come, king Lakshadatta happened to see him one day, and feeling pity for him, reflected, "Though he has been long afflicted, I have not as yet given him anything, so why should I not give him something in a disguised form, and so find out whether the guilt of this poor man has been effaced, or not, and whether even now Fortune will grant him a sight of her, or not?" Thus reflecting, the king deliberately entered his treasury, taking with him a lemon in his hand. And upon his return

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therefrom, he held an assembly of all his subjects, having appointed a meeting outside his palace, and there entered the assembly all his citizens, chiefs, and ministers. And when the dependent entered among them, the king said to him with an affectionate voice, "Come here"; then the dependent, on hearing this, was delighted, and coming near, he sat in front of the king. Then the king said to him, "Utter some composition of your own." Then the dependent recited the following Áryá verse—"Fortune ever replenishes the full man, as all the streams replenish the sea, but she never even comes within the range of the eyes of the poor." When the king had heard this, and had made him recite it again, he was pleased, and gave him the lemon which he had carried. And the people said, "This king puts a stop to the poverty of everyone with whom he is pleased; so this dependent is to be pitied, since this very king, though pleased with him, after summoning him politely, has given him nothing but this lemon; a wishing-tree in the case of ill-starred men, often becomes a *palása*-tree." These were the words which all in the assembly said to one another in their despondency, when they saw that, for they did not know the truth.

But the dependent went out, with the lemon in his hand, and when he was in a state of despondency, a mendicant came before him. And that mendicant, named Rájavandin, seeing that the lemon was a fine one, obtained it from that dependent by giving him a garment. And then the mendicant entered the assembly, and gave that fruit to the king, and the king, recognizing it, said to that hermit, "Where, reverend sir, did you procure this lemon?" Then he told the king that the dependent had given it to him. Then the king was grieved and astonished, reflecting that his guilt was not expiated even now. The king Lakshadatta took the lemon, rose up from the assembly, and performed the duties of the day. And the dependent sold the garment, and after he had eaten and drunk, remained at his usual post at the king's gate.

And on the second day the king held a general assembly,

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and everybody appeared at it again, citizens and all. And the king, seeing that the dependent had entered the assembly, called him as before, and made him sit near him. And after making him again recite that very same Áryá verse, being pleased, he gave him that very same lemon which he had given him before. And all there thought with astonishment—"Ah! this is the second time that our master is pleased with him without his gaining by it." And the dependent, in despondency, took the lemon in his hand, and thinking that the king's good will had again been barren of results, went out. At that very moment a certain official met him, who was about to enter that assembly, wishing to see the king. He, when he saw that lemon, took a fancy to it, and regarding the omen, procured it from the dependent by giving him a pair of garments. And entering the king's court, he fell at the feet of the sovereign, and first gave him the lemon, and then another present of his own. And when the king recognized the fruit, he asked the official where he got it, and he replied, "From the dependent." And the king, thinking in his heart that Fortune would not even now give the dependent a sight of her, was exceedingly sad. And he rose up from the assembly with that lemon, and the dependent went to the market with the pair of garments he had got. And by selling one garment he procured meat and drink, and tearing the other in half he made two of it. Then on the third day also the king held a general assembly, and all the subjects entered, as before, and when the dependent entered, the king gave him the same lemon again, after calling him and making him recite the Áryá verse. Then all were astonished, and the dependent went out, and gave that lemon to the king's favorite. And she, like a moving creeper of the tree of the king's regard, gave him gold, which was, so to speak, the flower, the harbinger of the fruit. The dependent sold it, and enjoyed himself that day, and the king's mistress went into his presence. And she gave him that lemon, which was large and fine, and he, recognizing it, asked her whence she procured it. Then she said, "The dependent gave it me." Hearing that, the

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king thought, "Fortune has not yet looked favorably upon him; his merit in a former life must have been slight, since he does not know that my favor is never barren of results." Thus verily the king reflected, and he took that lemon, and put it away safely, and rose up and performed the duties of the day. And on the fourth day the king held an assembly in the same way, and it was filled with all his subjects, feudatories, ministers and all. And the dependent came there again, and again the king made him sit in front of him, and when he bowed before him, the king made him recite the Áryá verse; and gave him the lemon, and when the dependent had half got hold of it, he suddenly let it go, and the lemon fell on the ground and broke in half. And as the joining of the lemon, which kept it together, was broken, there rolled out of it many valuable jewels, illuminating that place of assembly. All the people, when they saw it, said, "Ah! we were deluded and mistaken, as we did not know the real state of the case, but such is the nature of the king's favor." When the king heard that, he said, "By this artifice I endeavored to ascertain, whether Fortune would now look on him or not. But for three days his guilt was not effaced; now it is effaced, and for that reason Fortune has now granted him a sight of herself." After the king had said this, he gave the dependent those jewels, and also villages, elephants, horses and gold, and made him a feudal chief. And he rose up from that assembly, in which the people applauded, and went to bathe; and that dependent too, having obtained his ends, went to his own dwelling.

The Cunning Crone

From the Arabic

THERE came one day an old woman to the stuff-bazar, with a casket of mighty fine workmanship, containing trinkets, and she was accompanied by a young baggage.

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The crone sat down at the shop of a draper and giving him to know that the girl was of the household of the Prefect of Police of the city, took of him, on credit, stuffs to the value of a thousand dinars and deposited with him the casket as security. She opened the casket and showed him that which was therein and he found it full of trinkets of price; so he trusted her with the goods and she farewelled him and carrying the stuffs to the girl who was with her, went her way. Then the old woman was absent from him a great while, and when her absence was prolonged, the draper despaired of her; so he went up to the Prefect's house and asked anent the woman of his household who had taken his stuffs on credit; but could obtain no tidings of her nor happen on any trace of her. Then he brought out the casket of jewelry and showed it to experts, who told him that the trinkets were gilt and that their worth was but an hundred dirhams. When he heard this, he was sore concerned thereat and presenting himself before the Deputy of the Sultan made his complaint to him; whereupon the official knew that a sleight had been served upon him and that the sons of Adam had cozened him and conquered him and cribbed his stuffs. Now the magistrate in question was a man of experience and judgment, well versed in affairs; so he said to the draper, " Remove somewhat from thy shop, including the casket, and to-morrow morning break the lock and cry out and come to me and complain that they have plundered all thy shop. Also mind thou call upon Allah for aid and wail aloud and acquaint the people, so that a world of folk may flock to thee and sight the breach of the lock and that which is missing from thy shop: and on this wise display it to everyone who presenteth himself that the news may be noised abroad, and tell them that thy chief concern is for a casket of great value, deposited with thee by a great man of the town and that thou standest in fear of him. But be thou not afraid and still say ever and anon in thy saying: My casket was the casket of Such-an-one, and I fear him and dare not bespeak him; but you, O company and all ye who are present, I call you to witness of this for me. And

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if there be with thee more than this saying, say it; and the old woman will assuredly come to thee." The draper answered with, "To hear is to obey," and going forth from the Deputy's presence, betook himself to his shop and brought out thence the casket and merchandise making a great display, which he removed to his house. At break of day he arose and going to his shop, broke the lock and shouted and shrieked and called on Allah for aid, till each and every of the folk assembled about him and all who were in the city were present, whereupon he cried out to them, saying even as the Prefect had bidden him; and this was bruited abroad. Then he made for the Prefecture and presenting himself before the Chief of Police, cried out and complained and made a show of distraction. After three days, the old woman came to him and bringing him the thousand dinars, the price of the stuffs, demanded the casket. When he saw her, he seized her and carried her to the Prefect of the city; and when she came before the Kazi, he said to her, "Woe to thee, O Sataness; did not thy first deed suffice thee, but thou must come a second time?" She replied, "I am of those who seek their plunder in the cities, and we foregather every month; and yesterday we foregathered." He asked her, "Canst thou cause me to catch them?" and she answered, "Yes; but, an thou wait till to-morrow, they will have dispersed; so I will deliver them to thee to-night." The Emir said to her, "Go"; and said she, "Send with me one who shall go with me to them and obey me in whatso I shall say to him, and all that I bid him he shall not gainsay and therein conform to my way." Accordingly, he gave her a company of men and she took them and bringing them to a certain door, said to them, "Stand ye here, at this door, and whoso cometh out to you, seize him; and I will come out to you last of all." "Hearing and obeying," answered they and stood at the door, whilst the crone went in. They waited a whole hour, even as the Sultan's deputy had bidden them, but none came out to them and their standing waxed longsome, and when they were weary of waiting, they went up to the door and smote upon it a heavy blow and a violent,

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so that they came nigh to break the wooden bolt. Then one of them entered and was absent a long while, but found naught; so he returned to his comrades and said to them, "This is the door of a dark passage, leading to such a thoroughfare; and indeed she laughed at you and left you and went away." When they heard his words, they returned to the Emir and acquainted him with the case, whereby he knew that the old woman was a cunning craftmistress and that she had mocked at them and cozened them and put a cheat on them, to save herself. Witness, then, the wiles of this woman and that which she contrived of guile, for all her lack of foresight in presenting herself a second time to the draper and not suspecting that his conduct was but a sleight; yet, when she found herself hard upon calamity, she straightway devised a device for her deliverance.

Judgment of a Solomon

From the Chinese

IN our district there lived two men, named Hu Ch'êng and Fêng Ngan, between whom there existed an old feud. The former, however, was the stronger of the two; and accordingly Fêng disguised his feelings under a specious appearance of friendship, though Hu never placed much faith in his professions. One day they were drinking together, and being both of them rather the worse for liquor, they began to brag of the various exploits they had achieved. "What care I for poverty," cried Hu, "when I can lay a hundred ounces of silver on the table at a moment's notice?" Now Fêng was well aware of the state of Hu's affairs, and did not hesitate to scout such pretensions, until Hu further informed him in perfect seriousness that the day before he had met a merchant traveling with a large sum of money and had tumbled him down a dry well by the wayside; in confirmation of which he produced sev-

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eral hundred ounces of silver, which really belonged to a brother-in-law on whose behalf he was managing some negotiation for the purchase of land. When they separated, Fêng went off and gave information to the magistrate of the place, who summoned Hu to answer to the charge. Hu then told the actual facts of the case, and his brother-in-law and the owner of the land in question corroborated his statement. However, on examining the dry well by letting a man down with a rope round him, lo! there was a headless corpse lying at the bottom. Hu was horrified at this, and called Heaven to witness that he was innocent; whereupon the magistrate ordered him twenty or thirty blows on the mouth for lying in the presence of such irrefragable proof, and cast him into the condemned cell, where he lay loaded with chains. Orders were issued that the corpse was not to be removed, and a notification was made to the people, calling upon the relatives of the deceased to come forward and claim the body. Next day a woman appeared, and said deceased was her husband; that his name was Ho, and that he was proceeding on business with a large sum of money about him when he was killed by Hu. The magistrate observed that possibly the body in the well might not be that of her husband, to which the woman replied that she felt sure it was; and accordingly the corpse was brought up and examined, when the woman's story was found to be correct. She herself did not go near the body, but stood at a little distance making the most doleful lamentation; until at length the magistrate said, "We have got the murderer, but the body is not complete; you go home and wait until the head has been discovered, when life shall be given for life." He then summoned Hu before him, and told him to produce the head by the next day under penalty of severe torture; but Hu only wandered about with the guard sent in charge of him, crying and lamenting his fate, but finding nothing. The instruments of torture were then produced, and preparations were made as if for torturing Hu; however, they were not applied, and finally the magistrate sent him back to prison, saying, "I suppose that in your hurry

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you didn't notice where you dropped the head." The woman was then brought before him again; and on learning that her relatives consisted only of one uncle, the magistrate remarked, "A young woman like you, left alone in the world, will hardly be able to earn a livelihood. [Here she burst into tears and implored the magistrate's pity.] The punishment of the guilty man has been already decided upon, but until we get the head, the case cannot be closed. As soon as it is closed, the best thing you can do is to marry again. A young woman like yourself should not be in and out of a police-court." The woman thanked the magistrate and retired; and the latter issued a notice to the people, calling upon them to make a search for the head. On the following day, a man named Wang, a fellow villager of the deceased, reported that he had found the missing head; and his report proving to be true, he was rewarded with 1,000 *cash*. The magistrate now summoned the woman's uncle above-mentioned, and told him that the case was complete, but that as it involved such an important matter as the life of a human being, there would necessarily be some delay in closing it for good and all.[1] "Meanwhile," added the magistrate, "your niece is a young woman and has no children; persuade her to marry again and so keep herself out of these troubles, and never mind what people may say." The uncle at first refused to do this; upon which the magistrate was obliged to threaten him until he was ultimately forced to consent. At this, the woman appeared before the magistrate to thank him for what he had done; whereupon the latter gave out that any

[1] There is a widespread belief that human life in China is held at a cheap rate. This may be accounted for by the fact that death is the legal punishment for many crimes not considered capital in the West; and by the severe measures that are always taken in cases of rebellion, when the innocent and guilty are often indiscriminately massacred. In times of tranquillity, however, this is not the case; and the execution of a criminal is surrounded by a number of formalities which go far to prevent the shedding of innocent blood. The *Hsi-yüan-lu* opens with the words, "There is nothing more important than human life."—HERBERT M. GILES, TRANSLATOR.

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person who was willing to take the woman to wife was to present himself at his yamên. Immediately afterwards an application was made—by the very man who had found the head. The magistrate then sent for the woman and asked her if she could say who was the real murderer; to which she replied that Hu Chêng had done the deed. "No!" cried the magistrate, "it was not he. It was you and this man here. [Here both began loudly to protest their innocence.] I have long known this; but, fearing to leave the smallest loophole for escape, I have tarried thus long in elucidating the circumstances. How [to the woman], before the corpse was removed from the well, were you so certain that it was your husband's body? *Because you already knew he was dead.* And does a trader who has several hundred ounces of silver about him dress as shabbily as your husband was dressed? And you [to the man], how did you manage to find the head so readily? *Because you were in a hurry to marry the woman.*" The two culprits stood there as pale as death, unable to utter a word in their defense; and on the application of torture both confessed the crime. For this man, the woman's paramour, had killed her husband, curiously enough, about the time of Hu Chêng's braggart joke. Hu was accordingly released, but Fêng suffered the penalty of a false accuser; he was severely bambooed, and banished for three years. The case was thus brought to a close without the wrongful punishment of a single person.

The Sultan and his Three Sons

From the Arabic

THERE was erewhile in the land of Al-Yaman a man which was a Sultan and under him were three Kinglets whom he overruled. He had four children; to wit, three sons and a daughter: he also owned wealth and treasures

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greater than reed can pen or page may contain; as well as animals such as horses and camels, sheep and black cattle; and he was held in awe by all the sovereigns. But when his reign had lasted for a length of time, Age brought with it ailments and infirmities and he became incapable of faring forth his Palace to the Divan, the hall of audience; whereupon he summoned his three sons to the presence and said to them, "As for me, 'tis my wish to divide among you all my substance ere I die, that ye may be equal in circumstance and live in accordance with whatso I shall command." And they said, "Hearkening and obedience." Then quoth the Sultan, "Let the eldest of you become sovereign after me: let the cadet succeed to my moneys and treasures, and as for the youngest let him inherit my animals of every kind. Suffer none to transgress against other; but each aid each and assist his co-partner." He then caused them to sign a bond and agreement to abide by his bequeathal; and, after delaying a while, he departed to the mercy of Allah. Thereupon his three sons got ready the funeral gear and whatever was suited to his estate for the mortuary obsequies such as cerements and other matters: they washed the corpse and enshrouded it and prayed over it: then, having committed it to the earth they returned to their palaces where the Wazirs and the Lords of the Land and the city-folk in their multitudes, high and low, rich and poor, flocked to condole with them on the loss of their father. And the news of his decease was soon bruited abroad in all the provinces; and deputations from each and every city came to offer condolence to the King's sons. These ceremonies duly ended, the eldest Prince demanded that he should be seated as Sultan on the stead of his sire in accordance with the paternal will and testament; but he could not obtain it from his two brothers as both and each said, "I will become ruler in room of my father." So enmity and disputes for the government now arose among them and it was not to be won by any; but at last quoth the eldest Prince, "Wend we and submit ourselves to the arbitration of a Sultan of the tributary sultans; and let him to whom he shall adjudge the realm

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take it and reign over it." Quoth they, "'Tis well!" and thereto agreed, as did also the Wazirs; and the three set out without suite seeking a Sultan of the sultans who had been under the hands of their sire, in order that they might take him to arbitrator. And they stinted not faring till the middle way, when behold, they came upon a mead abounding in herbage and in rain-water lying sheeted. So they sat them down to rest and to eat of their victual, when one of the brothers, casting his eye upon the herbage, cried, "Verily a camel hath lately passed this way laden half with Halwa-sweetmeats and half with Hamiz-pickles." "True," cried the second, "and he was blind of an eye." Hardly, however, had they ended their words when lo! the owner of the camel came upon them (for he had overheard their speech and had said to himself, "By Allah, these three fellows have driven off my property, inasmuch as they have described the burden and eke the beast as one-eyed"), and cried out, "Ye three have carried away my camel!" "By Allah we have not seen him," quoth the Princes, "much less have we touched him"; but quoth the man, "By the Almighty, who can have taken him except you? and if you will not deliver him to me, off with us, I and you three, to the Sultan." They replied, "By all manner of means; let us wend to the sovereign." So the four hied forth, the three Princes and the Cameleer, and ceased not faring till they reached the capital of the King. There they took seat without the wall to rest for an hour's time, and presently they arose and pushed into the city and came to the royal Palace. Then they craved leave of the Chamberlains, and one of the Eunuchs caused them enter and signified to the sovereign that the three sons of Such-an-such a Sultan had made act of presence. So he bade them be set before him and the four went in and saluted him, and prayed for him and he returned their salams. He then asked them, "What is it hath brought you hither and what may ye want in the way of inquiry?" Now the first to speak was the Cameleer and he said, "O my lord the Sultan; verily these three men have carried off my camel by proof of their own speech, for they have indeed de-

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scribed him and the burden he bore! And I require of our lord the Sultan that he take from these wights and deliver to me the camel which is mine as proved by their own words." Presently, asked the Sultan, "What say ye to the claims of this man and the camel belonging to him?" Hereto the Princes made answer, "By Allah, O King of the Age, we have not seen the camel, much less have we stolen him." Thereupon the Cameleer exclaimed, "O my lord, I heard yonder one say that the beast was blind of an eye; and the second said that half his load was of sour stuff and the other half was of sweet stuff." They replied, "True, we spake these words"; and the Sultan cried to them, "Ye have purloined the beast by this proof." They rejoined, "No, by Allah, O my lord. We sat us in such a place for repose and refreshment and we remarked that some of the pasture had been grazed down, so we said: This is the grazing of a camel; and he must have been blind of one eye as the grass was eaten only on one side. But as for our saying that the load was half Halwa-sweetmeats and half Hamiz-pickles, we saw on the place where the camel had knelt the flies gathering in great numbers while on the other were none: so the case was clear to us (as flies settle on naught save the sugared) that one of the panniers must have contained sweets and the other sours." Hearing this the Sultan said to the Cameleer, "O man, fare thee forth and look after thy camel; for these signs and tokens prove not the theft of these men, but only the power of their intellect and their penetration." And when the Cameleer heard this, he went his ways. Presently the Sultan cleared a place in the Palace and allotted to it the Princes for their entertainment: he also directed they be supplied with a banquet and the eunuchs did his bidding. But when it was eventide and supper was served up, the trio sat down to it purposing to eat; the cadet tasting a bit of kid exclaimed, "This kid was suckled by a dog"; and the youngest exclaimed, "Assuredly this Sultan must be of ignoble birth." And this was said by the youths what while the sultan had hidden himself in order to hear and to profit by the Princes' words. So he waxed

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wroth and entered hastily crying, "What be these speeches ye have spoken?" They replied, "Concerning what thou hast heard inquire within and thou wilt find it wholly true." The Sultan then went forth and summoned the head-shepherd and asked him concerning the kid he had butchered. He replied, "By Allah, O my lord, the nanny-goat that bare the kid died and we found none other in milk to suckle him; but I had a dog that had just pupped and her have I made nourish him." The Sultan lastly hent his sword in hand and proceeded to the apartments of the Sultanah-mother and cried, "By Allah, unless thou avert my shame we will cut thee down with this scimiter! Say me whose son am I?" She replied, "By Allah, O my child, indeed falsehood is an excuse, but fact and truth are more saving and superior. Verily thou art the son of a cook! Thy sire could not obtain boy-children and I bare him only a single daughter. But it so fortuned that the kitchener's wife lay in of a boy (to wit, thyself); so we gave my girl-babe to the cook and took thee as a son of the Sultan, dreading for the realm after thy sire's death." The King went forth from his mother in astonishment at the penetration of the youths and, when he had taken seat in his palace, he summoned the trio and as soon as they appeared he asked them: "Which of you was it that said of the kid's meat that the beast was suckled by a dog? What proof had he of this? How did he learn it and whence did his intelligence discover it to him?" Now when the deceased Sultan's second son heard these words, he made answer: "I, O King of the Age, am he who said that say!" The King replied, "'Tis well"; and the Prince resumed, "O my lord, that which showed me the matter of the meat which was to us brought is as follows: I found the fat of the kid all near by the bone, and I knew that the beast had sucked dog's milk; for the flesh of dogs lieth outside and their fat is on their bones, whereas in sheep and goats the fat lieth upon the meat. Such, then, was my proof wherein there is no doubt nor hesitation; and when thou shalt have made question and inquiry thou wilt find this to be fact." Quoth the Sultan, "'Tis well; thou hast spoken truth and

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whatso thou sayest is soothfast. But which is he who declared that I am ignoble and what was his proof and what sign in me exposed it to him?" Quoth the youngest Prince, "I am he who said it"; and the Sultan rejoined, "There is no help but that thou provide me with a proof." The Prince rejoined, "O my lord, I have evidence that thou art the son of a cook and a base-born, in that thou didst not sit at meat with us and this was mine all-sufficient evidence. Every man hath three properties which he inheriteth at times from his father, at times from his maternal uncle and at times from his mother. From his sire cometh generosity or niggardness; from his uncle courage or cowardice; from his mother modesty or immodesty; and such is the proof of every man." Then quoth to him the Sultan, "Sooth thou speakest; but say me, men who like you know all things thoroughly by evidence and by your powers of penetration, what cause have they to come seeking arbitration at my hand? Beyond yours there be no increase of intelligence. So fare ye forth from me and manage the matter among yourselves, for 'tis made palpable to me by your own words that naught remaineth to you save to speak of mysterious subjects; nor have I the capacity to adjudge between you after that which I have heard from you. In fine an ye possess any document drawn up by your sire before his decease, act according to it and contrary it not." Upon this the Princes went forth from him and made for their own country and city and did as their father had bidden them do on his death-bed. The eldest enthroned himself as Sultan; the cadet assumed possession and management of the moneys and treasures, and the youngest took to himself the camels and the horses and the beeves and the muttons. Then each and every was indeed equal with his co-partner in the gathering of good.

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A Tale of a Demon

From the Sanskrit

ON the banks of the Godávarí there is a place named Pratishṭhána. In it there lived of old time a famous king, named Trivikramasena, the son of Vikramasena, equal to Indra in might. Every day, when he was in his hall of audience, a mendicant named Kshántiśíla came to him, to pay him his respects, and presented him with a fruit. And every day the king, as soon as he received the fruit, gave it into the hand of the superintendent of his treasury who was near him. In this way ten years passed, but one day, when the mendicant had left the hall of audience, after giving the fruit to the king, the king gave it to a young pet monkey, that had escaped from the hands of its keepers, and happened to enter there. While the monkey was eating that fruit, it burst open, and there came out of it a splendid priceless jewel. When the king saw that, he took up the jewel, and asked the treasurer the following question, "Where have you put all those fruits which I have been in the habit of handing over to you, after they were given to me by the mendicant?" When the superintendent of the treasury heard that, he was full of fear, and he said to the king, "I used to throw them into the treasury from the window without opening the door; if your Majesty orders me, I will open it and look for them." When the treasurer said this, the king gave him leave to do so, and he went away, and soon returned, and said to the king, "I see that those fruits have all rotted away in the treasury, and I also see that there is a heap of jewels there resplendent with radiant gleams."

When the king heard it, he was pleased, and gave those jewels to the treasurer, and the next day he said to the mendicant, who came as before, "Mendicant, why do you court me every day with great expenditure of wealth? I will not take your fruit to-day until you tell me." When

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the king said this, the mendicant said to him in private, "I have an incantation to perform which requires the aid of a brave man. I request, hero, that you will assist me in it." When the king heard that, he consented and promised him that he would do so. Then the mendicant was pleased and he went on to say to that king, "Then I shall be waiting for you at nightfall in the approaching black fortnight, in the great cemetery here, under the shade of a *banyan*-tree, and you must come to me there." The king said, "Well! I will do so." And the mendicant Kshántiśíla returned delighted to his own dwelling.

Then the heroic monarch, as soon as he had got into the black fortnight, remembered the request of the mendicant, which he had promised to accomplish for him, and as soon as night came, he enveloped his head in a black cloth, and left the palace unperceived, sword in hand, and went fearlessly to the cemetery. It was obscured by a dense and terrible pall of darkness, and its aspect was rendered awful by the ghastly flames from the burning of the funeral pyres, and it produced horror by the bones, skeletons, and skulls of men that appeared in it. In it were present formidable Bhútas and Vetálas, joyfully engaged in their horrible activity, and it was alive with the loud yells of jackals, so that it seemed like a second mysterious tremendous form of Bhairava. And after he had searched about in it, he found that mendicant under a *banyan*-tree, engaged in making a circle, and he went up to him and said, "Here I am arrived, mendicant; tell me, what can I do for you?"

When the mendicant heard that, and saw the king, he was delighted, and said to him, "King, if I have found favor in your eyes, go alone a long way from here toward the south, and you will find an *asoka*-tree. On it there is a dead man hanging up; go and bring him here; assist me in this matter, hero." As soon as the brave king, who was faithful to his promise, heard this, he said, "I will do so," and went toward the south. And after he had gone some way in that direction, along a path revealed by the light of the flaming pyres, he reached with difficulty in the darkness

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that *aśoka*-tree; the tree was scorched with the smoke of funeral pyres, and smelled of raw flesh, and looked like a Bhúta, and he saw the corpse hanging on its trunk, as it were on the shoulder of a demon. So he climbed up, and cutting the string which held it, flung it to the ground. And the moment it was flung down, it cried out, as if in pain. Then the king, supposing it was alive, came down and rubbed its body out of compassion; that made the corpse utter a loud demoniac laugh. Then the king knew that it was possessed by a Vetála, and said without flinching, "Why do you laugh? Come, let us go off." And immediately he missed from the ground the corpse possessed by the Vetála, and perceived that it was once more suspended on that very tree. Then he climbed up again and brought it down, for the heart of heroes is a gem more impenetrable than adamant. Then King Trivikramasena threw the corpse possessed by a Vetála over his shoulder, and proceeded to go off with it, in silence. And as he was going along, the Vetála in the corpse that was on his shoulder said to him, "King, I will tell you a story to beguile the way, listen.

STORY OF THE PRINCE, WHO WAS HELPED TO A WIFE BY THE SON OF HIS FATHER'S MINISTER

There is a city (said the demon) named Váránasí, which is the dwelling-place of Śiva, inhabited by holy beings, and thus resembles the plateau of Mount Kailása. The river Ganges, ever full of water, flows near it, and appears as if it were the necklace ever resting on its neck; in that city there lived of old time a king named Pratápamukuta, who consumed the families of his enemies with his valor, as the fire consumes the forest. He had a son named Vajramukuta, who dashed the god of love's pride in his beauty, and his enemies' confidence in their valor. And that prince had a friend, named Buddhiśaríra, whom he valued more than his life, the sagacious son of a minister.

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Once on a time that prince was amusing himself with that friend, and his excessive devotion to the chase made him travel a long distance. As he was cutting off the long-maned heads of lions with his arrows, as it were the chowries that represented the glory of their valor, he entered a great forest. It seemed like the chosen home of love, with singing cuckoos for bards, fanned by trees with their clusters of blossoms, waving like chowries. In it he and the minister's son saw a great lake, looking like a second sea, the birthplace of lotuses of various colors; and in that pool of gods there was seen by him a maiden of heavenly appearance, who had come there with her attendants to bathe. She seemed to fill the splendid tank with the flood of her beauty, and with her glances to create in it a new forest of blue lotuses. With her face, that surpassed the moon in beauty, she seemed to put to shame the white lotuses, and she at once captivated with it the heart of that prince. The youth, too, in the same way, took with a glance such complete possession of her eyes, that she did not regard her own attire or even her ornaments. And as he was looking at her with his attendants, and wondering who she was, she made, under pretense of pastime, a sign to tell him her country and other particulars about her. She took a lotus from her garland of flowers, and put it in her ear, and she remained for a long time twisting it into the form of an ornament called *dantapatra* or tooth-leaf, and then she took another lotus and placed it on her head, and she laid her hand significantly upon her heart. The prince did not at that time understand those signs, but his sagacious friend the minister's son did understand them. The maiden soon departed, being led away from that place by her attendants, and when she had reached her own house, she flung herself down on a sofa, but her heart remained with that prince, to justify the sign she had made.

The prince, for his part, when without her, was like a Vidyádhara who has lost his magic knowledge, and, returning to his own city, he fell into a miserable condition. And one day the minister's son questioned him in private, speak-

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ing of that beauty as easy to obtain, whereupon he lost his self-command and exclaimed, "How is she to be obtained, when neither her name, nor her village, nor her origin is known? So why do you offer me false comfort?" When the prince said this to the minister's son, he answered, "What! did you not see, what she told you by her signs? By placing the lotus in her ear, she meant to say this, 'I live in the realm of King Karnotpala.' By making it into the tooth-leaf ornament she meant to say, 'Know that I am the daughter of a dentist there.' By lifting up the lotus she let you know her name was Padmávatí; and by placing her hand on her heart she told you that it was yours. Now there is a king named Karnotpala in the country of Kalinga; he has a favorite courtier, a great dentist named Sangrámavardhana, and he has a daughter named Padmávatí, the pearl of the three worlds, whom he values more than his life. All this I knew from the talk of the people, and so I understood her signs, which were meant to tell her country and the other particulars about her."

When that prince had been told all this by the minister's son, he was pleased with that intelligent man, and rejoiced, as he had now got an opportunity of attaining his object, and, after he had deliberated with him, he set out with him from his palace on the pretense of hunting, but really in search of his beloved, and went again in that direction. And on the way he managed to give his retinue the slip by the speed of his swift horse, and he went to the country of Kalinga accompanied by the minister's son only. There they reached the city of King Karnotpala, and searched for and found the palace of that dentist, and the prince and the minister's son entered the house of an old woman, who lived near there, to lodge. The minister's son gave their horses water and fodder, and placed them there in concealment, and then said to that old woman in the presence of the prince, "Do you know, mother, a dentist named Sangrámavardhana?" When the old woman heard that, she said to him courteously, "I know him well; I was his nurse, and he has now made me attend upon his daughter as a

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duenna; but I never go there at present, as I have been deprived of my clothes, for my wicked son, who is a gambler, takes away my clothes as soon as he sees them." When the minister's son heard this, he was delighted, and he gratified the old woman with the gift of his upper garment and other presents, and went on to say to her, "You are a mother to us, so do what we request you to do in secret; go to that Padmávatí, the daughter of the dentist, and say to her, 'The prince, whom you saw at the lake, has come here, and out of love he has sent me to tell you.'" When the old woman heard this, she consented, being won over by the presents, and went to Padmávatí, and came back in a moment. And when the prince and the minister's son questioned her, she said to them, "I went and told her secretly that you had come. When she heard that, she scolded me, and struck me on both cheeks with her two hands smeared with camphor. So I have come back weeping, distressed at the insult. See here, my children, these marks of her fingers on my face."

When she said this, the prince was despondent, as he despaired of attaining his object, but the sagacious minister's son said to him in private, "Do not despond, for by keeping her own counsel and scolding the old woman, and striking her on the face with her ten fingers white with camphor, she meant to say, 'Wait for these remaining ten moonlight nights of the white fortnight, for they are unfavorable to an interview.'"

After the minister's son had comforted the prince with these words, he went and sold secretly in the market some gold, which he had about him, and made that old woman prepare a splendid meal, and then those two ate it with that old woman. After the minister's son had spent ten days in this fashion, he again sent the old woman to Padmávatí, to see how matters stood. And she, being fond of delicious food, liquor, and other enjoyments of the kind, went again to the dwelling-house of Padmávatí, to please her guests, and returned and said to them, "I went there to-day and remained silent, but she of her own accord taunted me with that crime of having brought your mes-

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sage, and again struck me here on the breast with three fingers dipped in red dye, so I have returned here thus marked by her." When the minister's son heard this, he said, of his own accord, to the prince, "Do not entertain any despondent notions, for by placing the impression of her three fingers marked with red dye on this woman's heart, she meant to say: 'I cannot receive you for three nights.'"

When the minister's son had said this to the prince, he waited till three days had passed, and again sent the old woman to Padmávatí. She went to her palace, and Padmávatí honored her and gave her food, and lovingly entertained her that day with wine and other enjoyments. And in the evening, when the old woman wished to go back to her house, there arose outside a terrible tumult. Then the people were heard exclaiming, "Alas! Alas! a mad elephant has escaped from the post to which he was tied, and is rushing about, trampling men to death." Then Padmávatí said to that old woman, "You must not go by the public road, which is rendered unsafe by the elephant, so we will put you on a seat, with a rope fastened to it to support it, and let you down by this broad window here into the garden of the house; there you must get up a tree and cross this wall, and then let yourself down by another tree and go to your own house." After she had said this, she had the old woman let down from the window by her maid into the garden, by means of that seat with a rope fastened to it. She went by the way pointed out to her, and related the whole story, exactly as it happened, to the prince and the minister's son. Then the minister's son said to the prince, "Your desire is accomplished, for she has shown you by an artifice the way you should take; so go there this very day, as soon as evening sets in, and by this way enter the palace of your beloved."

When the minister's son said this, the prince went with him into the garden, by the way over the wall pointed out by the old woman. There he saw that rope hanging down with the seat, and at the top of it were some maids, who

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seemed to be looking out for his arrival. So he got on to the seat, and the moment those female servants saw him, they pulled him up with the rope, and he entered the presence of his beloved through the window. When he had entered, the minister's son returned to his lodging. And when the prince entered, he beheld that Padmávatí with a face like a full moon, shedding forth beauty like beams, like the night of the full moon remaining concealed through fear of the black fortnight. As soon as she saw him, she rose up boldly, and welcomed him with affectionate embraces and other endearments natural in one who had waited for him so long. Then the prince married that fair one by the Gándharva form of marriage, and all his wishes being now fulfilled, remained with her in concealment.

And after he had lived with her some days, he said to her one night, "My friend the minister's son came with me and is staying here, and he is now left alone in the house of your duenna; I must go and pay him a visit, fair one, and then I will return to you." When the cunning Padmávatí heard that, she said to her lover, "Come now, my husband, I have a question to ask you; did you guess the meaning of those signs which I made, or was it that friend of yours the minister's son?" When she said this, the prince said to her, "I did not guess anything at all, but that friend of mine, the minister's son, who is distinguished for superhuman insight, guessed it all, and told it to me." When the fair one heard this, she reflected, and said to him, "Then you have acted wrongly in not telling me about him before. Since he is your friend, he is my brother, and I must always honor him before all others with gifts of betel and other luxuries." When she had dismissed him with these words, the prince left the palace at night by the way by which he came, and returned to his friend. And in the course of conversation he told him, that he had told his beloved how he guessed the meaning of the signs which she made. But the minister's son did not approve of this proceeding on his part, considering it imprudent. And so the day dawned on them conversing.

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Then, as they were again talking together after the termination of the morning prayer, the confidante of Padmávatí came in with betel and cooked food in her hand. She asked after the health of the minister's son, and after giving him the dainties, in order by an artifice to prevent the prince from eating any of them, she said, in the course of conversation, that her mistress was awaiting his arrival to feast and spend the day with her, and immediately she departed unobserved. Then the minister's son said to the prince, "Now observe, prince, I will show you something wonderful." Thereupon he gave that cooked food to a dog to eat, and the dog, as soon as he had eaten it, fell dead upon the spot. When the prince saw that, he said to the minister's son, "What is the meaning of this marvel?" And he answered him, "The truth is that the lady has found out that I am intelligent, by the fact that I guessed the meaning of her signs, and so she has sent me this poisoned food in order to kill me, for she is deeply in love with you, and thinks that you, prince, will never be exclusively devoted to her while I am alive, but being under my influence, will perhaps leave her, and go to your own city. So give up the idea of being angry with her, persuade the high-spirited woman to leave her relations, and I will invent and tell you an artifice for carrying her off."

When the minister's son had said this, the prince said to him, "You are rightly named Buddhiśaríra as being an incarnation of wisdom"; and at the very moment that he was thus praising him, there was suddenly heard outside a general cry from the sorrowing multitude, "Alas! Alas! the king's infant son is dead." The minister's son was much delighted at hearing this, and he said to the prince, "Repair now to Padmávatí's palace at night, and there make her drink so much, that she shall be senseless and motionless with intoxication, and apparently dead. And when she is asleep, make a mark on her side with a red hot iron spike, and take away all her ornaments, and return by letting yourself down from the window by a rope; and after that I will take steps to make everything turn out prosperously."

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When the minister's son had said this, he had a three-pronged spike made, with points like the bristles of a boar, and gave it to the prince. And the prince took in his hand that weapon which resembled the crooked hard hearts of his beloved and of his friend, which were firm as black iron; and saying, "I will do as you direct," went at night to the palace of Padmávatí as before, for princes should never hesitate about following the advice of an excellent minister. There he made his beloved helpless with drink, and marked her on the side with the spike, and took away her ornaments, and then he returned to that friend of his. And he showed him the ornaments, and told him what he had done. Then the minister's son considered his design as good as accomplished.

And the next morning the minister's son went to the cemetery, and promptly disguised himself as an ascetic, and he made the prince assume the guise of a disciple. And he said to him, "Go and take the pearl necklace which is part of this set of ornaments, and pretend to try to sell it in the market, but put a high price on it, that no one may be willing to buy it, and that everyone may see it being carried about, and if the police here should arrest you, say intrepidly, "My spiritual preceptor gave it me to sell."

When the minister's son had sent off the prince on this errand, he went and wandered about in the market-place, publicly showing the necklace. And while he was thus engaged, he was seen and arrested by the police, who were on the lookout for thieves, as information had been given about the robbery of the dentist's daughter. And they immediately took him to the chief magistrate of the town; and he, seeing that he was dressed as an ascetic, said to him courteously, "Reverend sir, where did you get this necklace of pearls which was lost in this city, for the ornaments of the dentist's daughter were stolen during the night?" When the prince, who was disguised as an ascetic, heard this, he said, "My spiritual preceptor gave it me; come and question him." Then the magistrate of the city came to the minister's son, and bowed, and said to him, "Rev-

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erend sir, where did you get this pearl necklace that is in the possession of your pupil?" When the cunning fellow heard that, he took him aside, and said, "I am an ascetic, in the habit of wandering perpetually backwards and forwards in the forests. As chance would have it, I arrived here, and as I was in the cemetery at night, I saw a band of witches collected from different quarters. And one of them brought the prince, with the lotus of his heart laid bare, and offered him to Bhairava. And the witch, who possessed great powers of delusion, being drunk, tried to take away my rosary, while I was reciting my prayers, making horrible contortions with her face. And as she carried the attempt too far, I got angry, and heating with a charm the prongs of my trident, I marked her on the side. And then I took this necklace from her neck. And now I must sell this necklace, as it does not suit an ascetic."

When the magistrate heard this, he went and informed the king. When the king heard it, he concluded that that was the pearl necklace which had been lost, and he sent a trustworthy old woman to see if the dentist's daughter was really marked with a trident on the side. The old woman came back and said that the mark could be clearly seen. Then the king made up his mind that she was a witch, and had really destroyed his child. So he went in person to that minister's son, who was personating an ascetic, and asked him how he ought to punish Padmávatí; and by his advice he ordered her to be banished from the city, though her parents lamented over her. And when she was banished, and was left in the forest, though desolate, she did not abandon the body, supposing that it was all an artifice devised by the minister's son. And in the evening the minister's son and the prince, who had abandoned the dress of ascetics, and were mounted on their horses, came upon her lamenting. And they consoled her, and mounted her upon a horse, and took her to their own kingdom. There the prince lived happily with her. But the dentist, supposing that his daughter had been devoured by wild beasts in the forests, died of grief, and his wife followed him.

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When the Vetála had said this, he went on to say to the king, "Now I have a doubt about this story, resolve it for me; was the minister's son guilty of the death of this married couple, or the prince, or Padmávatí? Tell me, for you are the chief of sages. And if, king, you do not tell me the truth, though you know it, this head of yours shall certainly split in a hundred pieces."

When the Vetála said this, the king, who discerned the truth, out of fear of being cursed, gave him this answer, "O thou skilled in magic arts, what difficulty is there about it? Why, none of the three was in fault, but the whole of the guilt attaches to King Karnotpala." The Vetála then said, "Why, what did the king do? Those three were instrumental in the matter. Are the crows in fault when the swans eat the rice?" Then the king said, "Indeed no one of the three was in fault, for the minister's son committed no crime, as he was forwarding his master's interests, and Padmávatí and the prince, being burned with the fire of the arrows of the god of Love, and being therefore undiscerning and ignorant, were not to blame, as they were intent on their own object. But the king Karnotpala, as being untaught in treatises of policy, and not investigating by means of spies the true state of affairs even among his own subjects, and not comprehending the tricks of rogues, and inexperienced in interpreting gestures and other external indications, is to be considered guilty, on account of the indiscreet step which he took."

When the Vetála, who was in the corpse, heard this, as the king by giving this correct answer had broken his silence, he immediately left his shoulder, and went somewhere unobserved by the force of his magic power, in order to test his persistence; and the intrepid king at once determined to recover him.

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The Jar of Olives and the Boy Kazi

From the Arabic

UNDER the reign of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid there dwelt in the city of Baghdad a certain merchant, 'Ali Khwajah hight, who had a small stock of goods wherewith he bought and sold and made a bare livelihood, abiding alone and without a family in the house of his forbears. Now so it came to pass that each night for three nights together he saw in vision a venerable Shaykh who bespake him thus, "Thou art beholden to make a pilgrimage to Meccah; why abidest thou sunk in heedless slumber and farest not forth as it behoveth thee?" Hearing these words he became sore startled and affrighted, so that he sold shop and goods and all that he had; and, with firm intent to visit the Holy House of Almighty Allah, he let his home on hire and joined a caravan that was journeying to Meccah the Magnified. But ere he left his natal city he placed a thousand gold pieces, which were over and above his need for the journey, within an earthen jar filled up with Asafiri or Sparrow-olives; and, having made fast the mouth thereof, he carried the jar to a merchant-friend of many years' standing and said, "Belike, O my brother, thou hast heard tell that I purpose going with a caravan on pilgrimage to Meccah, the Holy City; so I have brought a jar of olives the which, I pray thee, preserve for me in trust against my return." The merchant at once arose and handing the key of his warehouse to Ali Khwajah said, "Here, take the key and open the store and therein place the jar anywhere thou choosest, and when thou shalt come back thou wilt find it even as thou leftest it." Hereupon Ali Khwajah did his friend's bidding and locking up the door returned the key to its master. Then loading his traveling goods upon a dromedary and mounting a second beast he fared forth with the caravan. They came at length to Meccah the Magnified, and it was the month Zu al-Hijjah wherein myriads of Mos-

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lems hie thither on pilgrimage and pray and prostrate before the Ka'abah-temple. And when he had circuited the Holy House, and fulfilled all the rites and ceremonies required of palmers, he set up a shop for sale of merchandise. By chance two merchants passing along that street espied the fine stuffs and goods in Ali Khwajah's booth and approved much of them and praised their beauty and excellence. Presently quoth one to other, "This man bringeth here most rare and costly goods: now in Cairo, the capital of Egypt-land, would he get full value for them, and far more than in the markets of this city." Hearing mention of Cairo, Ali Khwajah conceived a sore longing to visit that famous capital, so he gave up his intent of return Baghdad-ward and purposed wayfaring to Egypt. Accordingly he joined a caravan and arriving thither was well-pleased with the place, both country and city; and selling his merchandise he made great gain therefrom. Then buying other goods and stuffs he purposed to make Damascus; but for one full month he tarried at Cairo and visited her sanctuaries and saintly places, and after leaving her walls he solaced himself with seeing many famous cities distant several days' journey from the capital along the banks of the River Nilus. Presently, bidding adieu to Egypt he arrived at the Sanctified House, Jerusalem, and prayed in the temple of the Banu Isra'il which the Moslems had reëdified. In due time he reached Damascus and observed that the city was well builded and much peopled, and that the fields and meads were well-watered with springs and channels and that the gardens and vergiers were laden with flowers and fruits. Amid such delights Ali Khwajah hardly thought of Baghdad; withal he ceased not to pursue his journey through Aleppo, Mosul, and Shiraz, tarrying some time at all of these towns, especially at Shiraz, till at length after seven years of wayfaring he came back to Baghdad.

For seven long years the Baghdad merchant never once thought of Ali Khwajah or of the trust committed to his charge; till one day as his wife sat at meat with him at the evening meal, their talk by chance was of olives. Quoth she

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to him, "I would now fain have some that I may eat of them"; and quoth he, "As thou speakest thereof I bethink me of that Ali Khwajah who seven years ago fared on a pilgrimage to Meccah, and ere he went left in trust with me a jar of Sparrow-olives which still cumbereth the store-house. Who knoweth where he is or what hath betided him? A man who lately returned with the Hajj-caravan brought me word that Ali Khwajah had quitted Meccah the Magnified with intent to journey on to Egypt. Allah Almighty alone knoweth an he be still alive or he be now dead; however, if his olives be in good condition I will go bring some hither that we may taste them: so give me a platter and a lamp that I may fetch thee somewhat of them." His wife, an honest woman and an upright, made answer, "Allah forbid that thou shouldst do a deed so base and break thy word and covenant. Who can tell? Thou art not assured by any of his death; perchance he may come back from Egypt safe and sound to-morrow or the day after; then wilt thou, an thou cannot deliver unharmed to him what he hath left in pledge, be ashamed of this thy broken troth, and we shall be disgraced before man and dishonored in the presence of thy friend. I will not for my part have any hand in such meanness nor will I taste the olives; furthermore, it standeth not to reason that after seven years' keeping they should be fit to eat. I do implore thee to forswear this ill-purpose." On such wise the merchant's wife protested and prayed her husband that he meddle not with Ali Khwajah's olives, and shamed him of his intent so that for the nonce he cast the matter from his mind. However, although the trader refrained that evening from taking Ali Khwajah's olives, yet he kept the design in memory until one day when, of his obstinacy and unfaith, he resolved to carry out his project; and rising up walked toward the store-room dish in hand. By chance he met his wife who said, "I am no partner with thee in this ill-action: in very truth some evil shall befall thee an thou do such deed." He heard her but heeded her not; and, going to the store-room opened the jar and found the olives spoiled and white

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with mold; but presently he tilted up the jar and pouring some of its contents into the dish, suddenly saw an Ashrafi fall from the vessel together with the fruit. Then, filled with greed, he turned out all that was within into another jar and wondered with exceeding wonder to find the lower half full of golden coins. Presently, putting up the moneys and the olives he closed the vessel and going back said to his wife, "Thou spakest sooth, for I have examined the jar and have found the fruit moldy and foul of smell; wherefore I returned it to its place and left it as it was aforetime." That night the merchant could not sleep a wink for thinking of the gold and how he might lay hands thereon; and when morning morrowed he took out all the Ashrafis and buying some fresh olives in the Bazar filled up the jar with them and closed the mouth and set it in its usual place. Now it came to pass by Allah's mercy that at the end of the month Ali Khwajah returned safe and sound to Baghdad; and he first went to his old friend, to wit, the merchant who, greeting him with feigned joy, fell on his neck, but withal was sore troubled and perplexed at what might happen. After salutations and much rejoicing on either part Ali Khwajah bespake the merchant on business and begged that he might take back his jar of Asafiri-olives which he had placed in charge of his familiar. Quoth the merchant to Ali Khwajah, "O my friend, I wot not where thou didst leave the jar of olives; but here is the key, go down to the store-house and take all that is thine own." So Ali Khwajah did as he was bidden and carrying the jar from the magazine took his leave and hastened home; but, when he opened the vessel and found not the gold coins, he was distracted and overwhelmed with grief and made bitter lamentation. Then he returned to the merchant and said, "O my friend, Allah, the All-present and the All-seeing, be my witness that, when I went on my pilgrimage to Meccah the Magnified, I left a thousand Ashrafis in that jar, and now I find them not. Canst thou tell me aught concerning them? An thou in thy sore need have made use of them, it mattereth not so thou wilt give them back as soon as thou art able."

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The merchant, apparently pitying him, said, "O good my friend, thou didst thyself with thine hand set the jar inside the store-room. I wist not that thou hadst aught in it save olives; yet as thou didst leave it, so in like manner didst thou find it and carry it away; and now thou chargest me with theft of Ashrafis. It seemeth strange and passing strange that thou shouldst make such accusation. When thou wentest thou madest no mention of any money in the jar, but saidst that it was full of olives, even as thou hast found it. Hadst thou left gold coins therein, then surely thou wouldst have recovered them." Hereupon Ali Khwajah begged hard with much entreaty, saying, "Those thousand Ashrafis were all I owned, the money earned by years of toil: I do beseech thee have pity on my case and give them back to me." Replied the merchant, waxing wroth with great wrath, "O my friend, a fine fellow thou art to talk of honesty and withal make such false and lying charge. Begone: hie thee hence and come not to my house again; for now I know thee as thou art, a swindler and impostor." Hearing this dispute between Ali Khwajah and the merchant all the people of the quarter came crowding to the shop; and thus it became well known to all, rich and poor, within the city of Baghdad how that one Ali Khwajah had hidden a thousand Ashrafis within a jar of olives and had placed it on trust with a certain merchant; moreover how, after pilgrimaging to Meccah and seven years of travel the poor man had returned, and that the rich man had gainsaid his words anent the gold and was ready to make oath that he had not received any trust of the kind. At length, when naught else availed, Ali Khwajah was constrained to bring the matter before the Kazi, and to claim one thousand Ashrafis of his false friend. The Judge asked, "What witnesses hast thou who may speak for thee?" and the plaintiff answered, "O my lord the Kazi, I feared to tell the matter to any man lest all come to know of my secret. Allah Almighty is my sole testimony. This merchant was my friend and I recked not that he would prove dishonest and unfaithful." Quoth the Judge, "Then must I needs send for the mer-

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chant and hear what he saith on oath"; and when the defendant came they made him swear by all he deemed holy, facing Ka'abah-wards with hands uplifted, and he cried, "I swear that I know naught of any Ashrafis belonging to Ali Khwajah." Hereat the Kazi pronounced him innocent and dismissed him from court; and Ali Khwajah went home sad at heart and said to himself, "Alas, what justice is this which hath been meted out to me, that I should lose my money, and my just cause be deemed unjust! It hath been truly said: He loseth the lave who sueth before a knave." On the next day he drew out a statement of his case; and, as the Caliph Harun al-Rashid was on his way to Friday-prayers, he fell down on the ground before him and presented to him the paper. The Commander of the Faithful read the petition and having understood the case deigned give order saying, "To-morrow bring the accuser and the accused to the audience-hall and place the petition before my presence, for I myself will inquire into this matter." That night the Prince of True Believers, as was his wont, donned disguise to walk about the squares of Baghdad and its streets and lanes and, accompanied by Ja'afar the Barmaki and Masrur the Sworder of his vengeance, proceeded to espy what happened in the city. Immediately on issuing forth he came upon an open place in the Bazar when he heard the hubbub of children a-playing and saw at scanty distance some ten or dozen boys making sport among themselves in the moonlight; and he stopped awhile to watch their diversion. Then one among the lads, a goodly and a fair-complexioned, said to the others, "Come now and let us play the game of Kazi: I will be the Judge; let one of you be Ali Khwajah and another the merchant with whom he placed the thousand Ashrafis in pledge before faring on his pilgrimage: so come ye before me and let each one plead his plea." When the Caliph heard the name of Ali Khwajah he minded him of the petition which had been presented to him for justice against the merchant, and bethought him that he would wait and see how the boy would perform the part of Kazi in their game and upon what de-

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cision he would decide. So the Prince watched the mock-trial with keen interest saying to himself, "This case hath verily made such stir within the city that even the children know thereof and re-act it in their sports." Presently, he among the lads who took the part of Ali Khwajah the plaintiff and his playmate who represented the merchant of Baghdad accused of theft, advanced and stood before the boy who as the Kazi sat in pomp and dignity. Quoth the Judge, "O Ali Khwajah, what is thy claim against this merchant?" and the complainant preferred his charge in a plea of full detail. Then said the Kazi to the boy who acted merchant, "What answerest thou to this complaint and why didst thou not return the gold pieces?" The accused made reply even as the real defendant had done and denied the charge before the Judge, professing himself ready to take oath thereto. Then said the boy-Kazi, "Ere thou swear on oath that thou hast not taken the money, I would fain see for myself the jar of olives which the plaintiff deposited with thee on trust." Then turning to the boy who represented Ali Khwajah he cried, "Go thou and instantly produce the jar that I may inspect it." And when the vessel was brought the Kazi said to the two contentious, "See now and say me: be this the very jar which thou, the plaintiff, leftest with the defendant?" and both answered that it was one and the same. Then said the self-constituted Judge, "Open now the jar and bring hither some of the contents that I may see the state in which the Asafiri-olives actually are." Then tasting of the fruit, "How is this? I find their flavor is fresh and their state excellent. Surely during the lapse of seven twelve-months the olives would have become moldy and rotten. Bring now before me two oil-merchants of the town that they may pass opinion upon them." Then two other of the boys assumed the parts commanded and coming into court stood before the Kazi, who asked, "Are ye olive-merchants by trade?" They answered, "We are and this hath been our calling for many generations, and in buying and selling olives we earn our daily bread." Then said the Kazi, "Tell me now, how long do olives keep fresh

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and well-flavored?" and said they, "O my lord, however carefully we keep them, after the third year they change flavor and color and become no longer fit for food, in fact they are good only to be cast away." Thereupon quoth the boy-Kazi, "Examine me now these olives that are in this jar and say me how old are they and what is their condition and savor." The two boys who played the parts of oil-merchants pretended to take some berries from the jar and taste them and presently they said, "O our lord the Kazi, these olives are in fair condition and full-flavored." Quoth the Kazi, "Ye speak falsely, for 'tis seven years since Ali Khwajah put them in the jar as he was about to go a-pilgrimaging"; and quoth they, "Say whatso thou wilt, those olives are of this year's growth, and there is not an oil-merchant in all Baghdad but who will agree with us." Moreover the accused was made to taste and smell the fruits and he could not but admit that it was even so as they had avouched. Then said the boy-Kazi to the boy-defendant, "'Tis clear thou art a rogue and a rascal, and thou hast done a deed wherefor thou richly deservest the gibbet." Hearing this the children frisked about and clapped their hands with glee and gladness, then seizing hold of him who acted as the merchant of Baghdad, they led him off as to execution. The Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, was greatly pleased at this acuteness of the boy who had assumed the part of judge in the play, and commanded his Wazir Ja'afar saying, "Mark well the lad who enacted the Kazi in this mock-trial and see that thou produce him on the morrow: he shall try the case in my presence substantially and in real earnest, even as we have heard him deal with it in play. Summon also the Kazi of this city that he may learn the administration of justice from this child. Moreover send word to Ali Khwajah bidding him bring with him the jar of olives, and have also in readiness two oil-merchants of the town." Thus as they walked along the Caliph gave orders to the Wazir and then returned to his palace. So on the morrow Ja'afar the Barmaki went to that quarter of the town where the children had enacted the mock-trial and

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asked the schoolmaster where his scholars might be, and he answered, "They have all gone away, each to his home." So the Minister visited the houses pointed out to him and ordered the little ones to appear in his presence. Accordingly they were brought before him, when he said to them, "Who among you is he that yesternight acted the part of Kazi in play and passed sentence in the case of Ali Khwajah?" The eldest of them replied, "'Twas I, O my lord the Wazir"; and then he waxed pale, not knowing why the question was put. Cried the Minister, "Come along with me; the Commander of the Faithful hath need of thee." At this the mother of the lad was sore afraid and wept; but Ja'afar comforted her and said, "O my lady, have no fear and trouble not thyself. Thy son will soon return to thee in safety, Inshallah—God willing—and methinks the Sultan will show much favor unto him." The woman's heart was heartened on hearing these words of the Wazir and she joyfully dressed her boy in his best attire and sent him off with the Wazir, who led him by the hand to the Caliph's audience-hall and executed all the other commandments which had been issued by his liege lord. Then the Commander of the Faithful, having taken seat upon the throne of justice, set the boy upon a seat beside him, and as soon as the contending parties appeared before him, that is Ali Khwajah and the merchant of Baghdad, he commanded them to state each man his case in presence of the child who should adjudge the suit. So the two, plaintiff and defendant, recounted their contention before the boy in full detail; and when the accused stoutly denied the charge and was about to swear on oath that what he said was true, with hands uplifted and facing Ka'abah-wards, the child-Kazi prevented him, saying, "Enough! swear not on oath till thou art bidden; and first let the jar of olives be produced in court." Forthwith the jar was brought forward and placed before him; and the lad bade open it; then, tasting one he gave also to two oil-merchants who had been summoned, that they might do likewise and declare how old was the fruit and whether its savor was good or bad. They did

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his bidding and said, "The flavor of these olives hath not changed and they are of this year's growth." Then said the boy, "Methinks ye are mistaken, for seven years ago Ali Khwajah put the olives into the jar: how then could fruit of this year find their way therein?" But they replied, "'Tis even as we say: an thou believe not our words send straightway for other oil-merchants and make inquiry of them, so shalt thou know if we speak sooth or lies." But when the merchant of Baghdad saw that he could no longer avail to prove his innocence, he confessed everything; to wit, how he had taken out the Ashrafis and filled the jar with fresh olives. Hearing this the boy said to the Prince of True Believers, "O gracious Sovereign, last night in play we tried this cause, but thou alone hast power to apply the penalty. I have adjudged the matter in thy presence and I humbly pray that thou punish this merchant according to the law of the Koran and the custom of the Apostle; and thou decree the restoring of his thousand gold pieces to Ali Khwajah, for that he hath been proved entitled to them."

Another Solomon

From the Chinese

AT T'ai-yüan there lived a middle-aged woman with her widowed daughter-in-law. The former was on terms of too great intimacy with a notably bad character of the neighborhood; and the daughter, who objected very strongly to this, did her best to keep the man from the house. The elder woman accordingly tried to send the other back to her family, but she would not go; and at length things came to such a pass that the mother-in-law actually went to the mandarin of the place and charged her daughter-in-law with the offense she herself was committing. When the mandarin inquired the name of the man concerned, she said she had only seen him in the dark and didn't know who he

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was, referring him for information to the accused. The latter, on being summoned, gave the man's name, but retorted the charge on her mother-in-law; and when the man was confronted with them, he promptly declared both their stories to be false. The mandarin, however, said there was a *primâ facie* case against him, and ordered him to be severely beaten, whereupon he confessed that it was the daughter-in-law whom he went to visit. This the woman herself flatly denied, even under torture; and on being released, appealed to a higher court, with a very similar result. Thus the case dragged on, until a Mr. Sun, who was well-known for his judicial acumen, was appointed district magistrate at that place. Calling the parties before him, he bade his lictors prepare stones and knives, at which they were much exercised in their minds, the severest tortures allowed by law being merely gyves and fetters. However, everything was got ready, and the next day Mr. Sun proceeded with his investigation. After hearing all that each one of the three had to say, he delivered the following judgment: "The case is a simple one; for although I cannot say which of you two women is the guilty one, there is no doubt about the man, who has evidently been the means of bringing discredit on a virtuous family. Take those stones and knives there and put him to death. I will be responsible." Thereupon the two women began to stone the man, especially the younger one, who seized the biggest stones she could see and threw them at him with all the might of her pent-up anger; while the mother-in-law chose small stones and struck him on non-vital parts.[1] So with the knives: the daughter-in-law would have killed him at the first blow, had not the mandarin stopped her, and said, "Hold! I now know who is the guilty woman." The mother-in-law was then tortured until she confessed, and the case was thus terminated.

[1] The Chinese distinguish sixteen vital spots on the front of the body and six on the back, with thirty-six and twenty non-vital spots in similar positions, respectively. They allow, however, that a severe blow on a non-vital spot might cause death, and *vice versâ*.

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Calamity Ahmad and Habzalam Bazazah

From the Arabic

CALIPH HARUN AL RASCHID went in to Kut al Kulub, who rose to him on sighting him and kissed the ground between his hands; when he said to her, "Hath Ala al-Din visited thee?" and she answered, "No, O Commander of the Faithful, I sent to bid him come, but he would not." So the Caliph bade carry her back to the Harim and saying to Ala al-Din, "Do not absent thyself from us," returned to his palace. Accordingly, next morning Ala al-Din mounted and rode to the Divan, where he took his seat as Chief of the Sixty.

Presently the Caliph ordered his treasurer to give the Wazir Ja'afar ten thousand dinars and said, when his order was obeyed, "I charge thee to go down to the bazaar where handmaidens are sold and buy Ala al-Din a slave girl with this sum." Accordingly in obedience to the King, Ja'afar took Ala al-Din and went down with him to the bazaar.

Now as chance would have it that very day, the Emir Khalid, whom the Caliph had made Governor of Baghdad, went down to the market to buy a slave girl for his son, and the cause of his going was that his wife, Khátun by name, had borne him a son called Habzalam Bazazah, and the same was foul of favor and had reached the age of twenty without learning to mount horse; albeit his father was brave and bold, a doughty rider ready to plunge into the Sea of Darkness.[1] And it happened that on a certain night his mother said to his father, "I want to find him a wife." Quoth Khalid, "The fellow is so foul of favor and withal so sordid and beastly that no woman would take him at a gift." And she answered, "We will buy him a slave girl."

So it befell, for the accomplishing of what Allah Al-

[1] Or night. A metaphor for rushing into peril.

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mighty had decreed, that on the same day Ja'afar and Ala al-Din, the Governor Khalid and his son went down to the market, and behold, they saw in the hands of a broker a beautiful girl, lovely faced and of perfect shape, and the Wazir said to him, "O broker, ask her owner if he will take a thousand dinars for her." And as the broker passed by the Governor with the slave, Habzalam Bazazah cast at her one glance of the eyes which entailed for himself one thousand sighs; and he fell in love with her and passion got hold of him and he said, "O my father, buy me yonder slave girl."

So the Emir called the broker, who brought the girl to him and asked her her name. She replied, "My name is Jessamine"; and he said to Habzalam Bazazah, "O my son, an she please thee, do thou bid higher for her." Then he asked the broker, "What hath been bidden for her?" and he replied, "A thousand dinars." Said the Governor's son, "She is mine for a thousand pieces of gold and one more," and the broker passed on to Ala al-Din who bid two thousand dinars for her; and as often as the Emir's son bid another dinar, Ala al-Din bid a thousand.

The ugly youth was vexed at this and said, "O broker! who is it that outbiddeth me for the slave girl?" Answered the broker, "It is the Wazir Ja'afar who is minded to buy her for Ala al-din Abu al-Shamat." And Ala al-Din continued till he brought her price up to ten thousand dinars, and her owner was satisfied to sell her for that sum.

Then he took the girl and said to her, "I give thee thy freedom for the love of Almighty Allah"; and forthwith wrote his contract of marriage with her and carried her to his house.

Now when the broker returned, after having received his brokerage, the Emir's son summoned him and said to him, "Where is the girl?" Quoth he, "She was bought for ten thousand dinars by Ala al-Din, who hath set her free and married her." At this the young man was greatly vexed and cast down and, sighing many a sigh, returned home, sick for love of the damsel; and he threw himself

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on his bed and refused food, for love and longing were sore upon him.

Now when his mother saw him in this plight, she said to him, "Heaven assain thee, O my son! What aileth thee?" And he answered, "Buy me Jessamine, O my mother!" Quoth she, "When the flower seller passeth I will buy thee a basketful of jessamine." Quoth he, "It is not the jessamine one smells, but a slave girl named Jessamine, whom my father would not buy for me." So she said to her husband, "Why and wherefore didst thou not buy him the girl?" and he replied, "What is fit for the lord is not fit for the liege and I have no power to take her: no less a man bought her than Ala al-Din, Chief of the Sixty."

Then the youth's weakness redoubled upon him, till he gave up sleeping and eating, and his mother bound her head with the fillets of mourning. And while in her sadness she sat at home, lamenting over her son, behold came in to her an old woman, known as the mother of Ahmad Kamakim, the arch thief, a knave who would bore through a middle wall and scale the tallest of the tall and steal the very kohl off the eyeball. From his earliest years he had been given to these malpractices, till they made him Captain of the Watch, when he stole a sum of money; and the Chief of Police, coming upon him in the act, carried him to the Caliph, who bade put him to death on the common execution ground. But he implored protection of the Wazir whose intercession the Caliph never rejected; so he pleaded for him with the Commander of the Faithful who said, "How canst thou intercede for this pest of the human race?" Ja'afar answered, "O Commander of the Faithful, do thou imprison him; whoso built the first jail was a sage, seeing that a jail is the grave of the living and a joy for the foe." So the Caliph bade lay him in bilboes and write thereon, "Appointed to remain here until death, and not to be loosed but on the corpse-washer's bench"; and they cast him fettered into limbo.

Now his mother was a frequent visitor to the house of

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the Emir Khalid, who was Governor and Chief of Police; and she used to go in to her son in jail and say to him, "Did I not warn thee to turn from thy wicked ways?" And he would always answer her, "Allah decreed this to me; but, O my mother, when thou visitest the Emir's wife, make her intercede for me with her husband." So when the old woman came into the Lady Khatun, she found her bound with the fillets of mourning, and said to her, "Wherefore dost thou mourn?" She replied, "For my son Habzalam Bazazah"; and the old woman exclaimed, "Heaven assain thy son! what hath befallen him?" So the mother told her the whole story, and she said, "What wouldst thou say of him who should achieve such a feat as would save thy son?" Asked the lady, "And what feat wilt thou do?" Quoth the old woman, "I have a son called Ahmad Kamakim, the arch thief, who lieth chained in jail and on his bilboes is written: Appointed to remain till death; so do thou don thy richest clothes and trick thee out with thy finest jewels and present thyself to thy husband with an open face and smiling mien; and say: By Allah, 'tis a strange thing! When a man desireth aught of his wife he dunneth her till she doeth it; but if a wife desire aught of her husband, he will not grant it to her. Then he will say: What dost thou want? and do thou answer: First swear to grant my request. If he swear to thee by his head or by Allah, say to him: Swear to me the oath of divorce and do not yield to him except he do this. And when he hath sworn to thee the oath of divorce, say to him: Thou keepest in prison a man called Ahmad Kamakim, and he hath a poor old mother who hath set upon me and who urgeth me in the matter and who saith, 'Let thy husband intercede for him with the Caliph, that my son may repent and thou gain heavenly guerdon.'" And the Lady Khatun replied, "I hear and obey."

So when her husband came in to his wife, she spoke to him as she had been taught and made him swear the divorce oath and yield to her wishes. When morning dawned, after he had made the Ghusl-ablution and prayed the dawn

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prayer, he repaired to the prison and said, "O Ahmad Kamakim, O thou arch thief, dost thou repent of thy works?" whereto he replied, "I do indeed repent and turn to Allah and say with heart and tongue: I ask pardon of Allah." So the Governor took him out of jail and carried him to the Court (he being still in bilboes), and approaching the Caliph kissed ground before him.

Quoth the King, "O Emir Khalid, what seekest thou?" whereupon he brought forward Ahmad Kamakim, shuffling and tripping in his fetters, and the Caliph said to him, "What! art thou yet alive, O Kamakim?" He replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, the miserable are long-lived." Quoth the Caliph to the Emir, "Why hast thou brought him hither?" and quoth he, "O Commander of the Faithful, he hath a poor old mother cut off from the world who hath none but this son and she hath had recourse to thy slave, imploring him to intercede with thee to strike off his chains, for he repenteth of his evil courses; and to make him Captain of the Watch as before."

The Caliph asked Ahmad Kamakim, "Dost thou repent of thy sins?" "I do indeed repent me to Allah, O Commander of the Faithful," answered he; whereupon the Caliph called for the blacksmith and made him strike off his irons on the corpse-washer's bench. Moreover, he restored him to his former office and charged him to walk in the ways of godliness and righteousness. So he kissed the Caliph's hands, and, being invested with the uniform of Captain of the Watch, he went forth, whilst they made proclamation of his appointment.

Now for a long time he abode in the exercise of his office, till one day his mother went in to the Governor's wife, who said to her, "Praised be Allah who hath delivered thy son from prison and restored him to health and safety! But why dost thou not bid him contrive some trick to get the girl Jessamine for my son Habzalam Bazazah?" "That will I," answered she and, going out from her, repaired to her son. She found him drunk with wine and said to him, "O my son, no one caused thy release from

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jail but the wife of the Governor, and she would have thee find some means to slay Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat and get his slave girl Jessamine for her son Habzalam Bazazah." He answered, "That will be the easiest of things; and I must needs set about it this very night."

Now this was the first night of the new month, and it was the custom of the Caliph to spend that night with the Lady Zubaydah, for the setting free of a slave girl, or a Mameluke, or something of the sort. Moreover, on such occasions he used to doff his royal habit, together with his rosary and dagger-sword and royal signet, and set them all upon a chair in the sitting saloon: and he had also a gold lantern, adorned with three jewels strung on a wire of gold, by which he set great store; and he would commit all these things to the charge of the eunuchs, whilst he went into the Lady Zubaydah's apartment.

So the arch thief Ahmad Kamakim waited till midnight, when Canopus shone bright, and all creatures to sleep were dight, whilst the Creator veiled them with the veil of night. Then he took his drawn sword in his right hand and his grappling hook in his left and, repairing to the Caliph's sitting saloon, planted his scaling ladder and cast his grapnel on to the side of the terrace roof; then, raising the trapdoor, let himself down into the saloon, where he found the eunuchs asleep.

He drugged them with hemp fumes; and, taking the Caliph's dress, dagger, rosary, kerchief, signet ring, and the lantern whereupon were the pearls, returned whence he came and betook himself to the house of Ala al-Din, who had that night celebrated his wedding festivities with Jessamine. So arch thief Ahmad Kamakim climbed over into his saloon and, raising one of the marble slabs from the sunken part of the floor, dug a hole under it and laid the stolen things therein, all save the lantern, which he kept for himself. Then he plastered down the marble slab as it was before, and returning whence he came, went back to his own house, saying, "I will now tackle my drink and set this lantern before me and quaff the cup to its light."

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Now as soon as it was dawn of day, the Caliph went out into the sitting chamber; and, seeing the eunuchs drugged with hemp, aroused them. Then he put his hand to the chair and found neither dress nor signet nor rosary nor dagger-sword nor kerchief nor lantern; whereat he was exceeding wroth and, donning the dress of anger, which was a scarlet suit,[1] sat down in the Divan.

So the Wazir Ja'afar came forward and kissing the ground before him, said, "Allah avert all evil from the Commander of the Faithful!" Answered the Caliph, "O Wazir, the evil is passing great!" Ja'afar asked, "What has happened?" So he told him what had occurred; and behold, the Chief of Police appeared with Ahmad Kamakim the robber at his stirrup, when he found the Commander of the Faithful sore enraged.

As soon as the Caliph saw him he said to him, "O Emir Khalid, how goes Baghdad?" And he answered, "Safe and secure." Cried he, "Thou liest!" "How so, O Prince of True Believers?" asked the Emir. So he told him the case and added, "I charge thee to bring me back all the stolen things." Replied the Emir, "O Commander of the Faithful, the vinegar worm is of and in the vinegar, and no stranger can get at this place."[2]

But the Caliph said, "Except thou bring me these things, I will put thee to death." Quoth he, "Ere thou slay me, slay Ahmad Kamakim, for none should know the robber and the traitor but the Captain of the Watch."

Then came forward Ahmad Kamakim and said to the Caliph, "Accept my intercession for the Chief of Police, and I will be responsible to thee for the thief and will track his trail till I find him; but give me two Kazis and two

[1] This till very late years was the custom in Persia, and Fath Ali Shah never appeared in scarlet without ordering some horrible cruelties. In Dar-For wearing a red cashmere turban was a sign of wrath, and sending a blood-red dress to a subject meant that he would be slain.

[2] That is, this robbery was committed in the palace by some one belonging to it.

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Assessors, for he who did this thing feareth thee not, nor doth he fear the Governor nor any other." Answered the Caliph, "Thou shalt have what thou wantest; but let search be made first in my palace and then in those of the Wazir and the Chief of the Sixty." Rejoined Ahmad Kamakim, "Thou sayest well, O Commander of the Faithful; belike the man that did this ill deed be one who hath been reared in the King's household or in that of one of his officers." Cried the Caliph, "As my head liveth, whosoever shall have done the deed I will assuredly put him to death, be it mine own son!"

Then Ahmad Kamakim received a written warrant to enter and perforce search the houses; so he went forth, taking in his hand a rod made of bronze and copper, iron and steel, of each three equal parts. He first searched the palace of the Caliph, then that of the Wazir Ja'afar; after which he went the round of the houses of the Chamberlains and the Viceroys till he came to that of Ala al-Din.

Now when the Chief of the Sixty heard the clamor before his house, he left his wife Jessamine and went down and, opening the door, found the Master of Police without in the midst of a tumultuous crowd. So he said, "What is the matter, O Emir Khalid?" Thereupon the Chief told him the case and Ala al-Din said, "Enter my house and search it." The Governor replied, "Pardon, O my lord; thou art a man in whom trust is reposed and Allah forfend that the trusty turn traitor!" Quoth Ala al-Din, "There is no help for it but that my house be searched."

So the Chief of Police entered, attended by the Kazi and his Assessors; whereupon Ahmad Kamakin went straight to the depressed floor of the saloon and came to the slab under which he had buried the stolen goods, and let the rod fall upon it with such violence that the marble broke in sunder, and behold something glittered underneath.

Then said he, "Bismillah; in the name of Allah! Mashallah; whatso Allah willeth! By the blessing of our coming a hoard hath been hit upon; wait while we go down into this hiding place and see what is therein." So the

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Kazi and Assessors looked into the hole and finding there the stolen goods, drew up a statement of how they had discovered them in Ala al-Din's house, to which they set their seals. Then they bade seize upon Ala al-Din and took his turban from his head, and officially registered all his moneys and effects which were in the mansion.

Meanwhile, arch thief Ahmad Kamakim laid hands on Jessamine, and committed her to his mother, saying, "Deliver her to Khatun, the Governor's lady." So the old woman took her and carried her to the wife of the Master of Police.

Now as soon as Habzalam Bazazah saw her, health and heart returned to him, and he arose without stay or delay and joyed with exceeding joy and would have drawn near her; but she plucked a dagger from her girdle and said, "Keep off from me, or I will kill thee and kill myself after."

With this the ugly youth's love-longing redoubled and he sickened for yearning and unfulfilled desire; and refusing food returned to his pillow.

Then said his mother to her, "O wretch, how canst thou make me thus to sorrow for my son? Needs must I punish thee with torture; and as for Ala al-Din, he will assuredly be hanged." "And I will die for love of him," answered Jessamine. Then the Governor's wife arose and stripped her of her jewels and silken raiment and, clothing her in sackcloth, sent her down into the kitchen and made her a scullery wench, saying, "The reward for thy constancy shall be to break up firewood and peel onions and set fire under the cooking pots." Quoth she, "I am willing to suffer all manner of hardships and servitude, but I will not suffer the sight of thy son." However, Allah inclined the hearts of the slave girls to her and they used to do her service in the kitchen.

Such was the case with Jessamine; but as regards Ala al-Din, they carried him, together with the stolen goods, to the Divan where the Caliph still sat upon his throne. And behold, the King looked upon his effects and said,

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"Where did ye find them?" They replied, "In the very middle of the house belonging to Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat," whereat the Caliph was filled with wrath and took the things, but found not the lantern among them and said, "O Ala al-Din, where is the lantern?" He answered, "I stole it not; I know naught of it; I never saw it; I can give no information about it!" Said the Caliph, "O traitor, how cometh it that I brought thee near unto me and thou hast cast me out afar, and I trusted in thee and thou betrayest me?" And he commanded to hang him.

So the Chief of Police took him and went down with him into the city, whilst the crier preceded them proclaiming aloud and saying, "This is the reward and the least of the reward he shall receive who doth treason against the Caliphs of True Belief!" And the folk flocked to the place where the gallows stood.

Thus far concerning him; but as regards Ahmad al-Danaf, Ala al-Din's adopted father, he was sitting making merry with his followers in a garden, and carousing and pleasuring when lo! in came one of the water carriers of the Divan and, kissing the hand of Ahmad al-Danaf, said to him, "O Captain Ahmad, O Danaf! thou sittest at thine ease with water flowing at thy feet, and thou knowest not what hath happened." Asked Ahmad, "What is it?" and the other answered, "They have gone down to the gallows with thy son Ala al-Din, adopted by a covenant before Allah!" Quoth Ahmad, "What is the remedy here, O Hasan Shuuman, and what sayest thou of this?"

He replied, "Assuredly Ala al-Din is innocent and this blame hath come to him from some one enemy." Quoth Ahmad, "What counselest thou?" and Hasan said, "We must rescue him, Inshallah!"

Then he went to the jail and said to the jailer, "Give us some one who deserveth death." So he gave him one that was likest of men to Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat; and they covered his head and carried him to the place of ex-

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ecution between Ahmad al-Danaf and Ali al-Zaybak of Cairo.

Now they had brought Ala al-Din to the gibbet, to hang him, but Ahmad al-Danaf came forward and set his foot on that of the hangman, who said, "Give me room to do my duty." He replied, "O accursed, take this man and hang him in Ala al-Din's stead; for he is innocent and we will ransom him with this fellow, even as Abraham ransomed Isaac with the ram."

So the hangman seized the man and hanged him in lieu of Ala al-Din; whereupon Ahmad and Ali took Ala al-Din and carried him to Ahmad's quarters and, when there, Ala al-Din turned to him and said, "O my sire and chief, Allah requite thee with the best of good!"

Quoth he, "O Ala al-Din, what is this deed thou hast done? The mercy of Allah be on him who said: Whoever trusteth thee betray him not, e'en if thou be a traitor. Now the Caliph set thee in high place about him and styled thee 'Trusty' and 'Faithful'; how then couldst thou deal thus with him and steal his goods?"

"By the Most Great Name, O my father and chief," replied Ala al-Din, "I had no hand in this, nor did I such deed, nor know I who did it." Quoth Ahmad, "Of a surety none did this but a manifest enemy, and whoever doth aught shall be requited for his deed; but, O Ala al-Din, thou canst sojourn no longer in Baghdad, for Kings, O my son, may not pass from one thing to another, and when they go in quest of a man, ah! long is his travail."

"Whither shall I go, O my chief?" asked Ala al-Din; and he answered, "O my son, I will bring thee to Alexandria, for 'tis a blessed place; its threshold is green and its sojourn is agreeable." And Ala al-Din rejoined, "I hear and I obey, O my chief." So Ahmad said to Hasan Shuuman, "Be mindful and, when the Caliph asketh for me, say: He is gone touring about the provinces."

Then, taking Ala al-Din, he went forth of Baghdad and stayed, not going till they came to the outlying vineyards and gardens, where they met two Jews of the Caliph's tax-

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gatherers, riding on mules. Quoth Ahmad al-Danaf to these, "Give me the blackmail," and quoth they, "Why should we pay thee blackmail?" whereto he replied, "Because I am the watchman of this valley." So they gave him each an hundred gold pieces, after which he slew them and took their mules, one of which he mounted, whilst Ala al-Din bestrode the other.

Then they rode on till they came to the city of Ayas and put up their beasts for the night at the Khan. And when morning dawned, Ala al-Din sold his own mule and committed that of Ahmad to the charge of the doorkeeper of the caravansary, after which they took ship from Ayas port and sailed to Alexandria. Here they landed and walked up to the bazaar and behold, there was a broker crying a shop and a chamber behind it for nine hundred and fifty dinars. Upon this Ala al-Din bid a thousand which the broker accepted, for the premises belonged to the Treasury; and the seller handed over to him the keys, and the buyer opened the shop and found the inner parlor furnished with carpets and cushions. Moreover, he found there a storeroom full of sails and masts, cordage, and seaman's chests, bags of beads and cowrie shells, stirrups, battle axes, maces, knives, scissors, and such matters, for the last owner of the shop had been a dealer in second-hand goods.

So he took his seat in the shop and Ahmad al-Danaf said to him, "O my son, the shop and the room and that which is therein are become thine; so tarry thou here and buy and sell; and repine not at thy lot, for Almighty Allah blesseth trade." After this he abode with him three days and on the fourth he took leave of him, saying, "Abide here till I go back and bring thee the Caliph's pardon and learn who hath played thee this trick." Then he shipped for Ayas, where he took the mule from the inn and, returning to Baghdad met Pestilence Hasan and his followers, to whom said he, "Hath the Caliph asked after me?" and he replied, "No, nor hast thou come to his thought."

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So he resumed his service about the Caliph's person and set himself to sniff about for news of Ala al-Din's case, till one day he heard the Caliph say to the Wazir, "See, O Ja'afar, how Ala al-Din dealt with me!" Replied the Minister, "O Commander of the Faithful, thou hast requited him with hanging, and hath he not met with his reward?" Quoth he, "O Wazir, I have a mind to go down and see him hanging"; and the Wazir answered, "Do what thou wilt, O Commander of the Faithful." So the Caliph, accomplained by Ja'afar went down to the place of execution and, raising his eyes, saw the hanged man to be other than Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, surnamed the Trusty, and said, "O Wazir, this is not Ala al-Din!" "How knowest thou that it is not he?" asked the Minister, and the Caliph answered, "Ala al-Din was short and this one is tall." Quoth Ja'afar, "Hanging stretcheth." Quoth the Caliph, "Ala al-Din was fair and this one's hair is black." Said Ja'afar, "Knowest thou not, O Commander of the Faithful, that death is followed by blackness?" Then the Caliph bade take down the body from the gallows-tree and they found the names of the two Shaykhs, Abu Bakr and Omar, written on his heels, whereupon cried the Caliph, "O Wazir, Ala al-Din was a Sunnite,[1] and this fellow is a Rejecter, a Shi'ah." He answered, "Glory be to Allah who knoweth the hidden things, while we know not whether this was Ala al-Din or other than he."

Then the Caliph bade bury the body and they buried it; and Ala al-Din was forgotten as though he never had been.

Such was his case; but as regards Habzalam Bazazah, the Emir Khalid's son, he ceased not to languish for love and longing till he died and they joined him to the dust. Now as for the young wife Jessamine, she gave birth to a boy-child like unto the moon; and when her fellow slave girls said to her, "What wilt thou name him?" she an-

[1] A Sunnite is a follower of the orthodox *tradition* (Arabic *sunna*), which was *rejected* by the Shi'ahs (Arabic *sectarian*), the followers of Ali and his martyred sons, Hasan and Hosain, the grandsons of the Prophet.

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swered, "Were his father well he had named him; but now I will name him Aslan."

Now it so came to pass that one day after two years, whilst his mother was busied with the service of the kitchen the boy went out and, seeing the stairs, mounted to the guest chamber. And the Emir Khalid who was sitting there took him upon his lap and glorified his Lord for that which he had created and fashioned; then closely eying his face, the Governor saw that he was the likest of all creatures to Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat. Presently his mother Jessamine sought for him and finding him not, mounted to the guest chamber, where she saw the Emir seated with the child playing in his lap, for Allah had inclined his heart to the boy. And when the child espied his mother, he would have thrown himself upon her; but the Emir held him tight to his bosom and said to Jessamine, "Come hither, O damsel!" So she came to him, when said to her, "Whose son is this?" and she replied, "He is my son." "And who is his father?" asked the Emir; and she answered, "His father was Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, but now he is become thy son." Quoth Khalid, "In very sooth Ala al-Din was a traitor." Quoth she, "Allah deliver him from treason! the heavens forfend and forbid that the 'Trusty' should be a traitor!"

Then said he, "When this boy shall grow up and reach man's estate and say to thee: Who is my father? do thou say to him: Thou art the son of the Emir Khalid, Governor and Chief of Police." And she answered, "I hear and I obey."

Then he adopted the boy and reared him with the goodliest rearing, and engaged for him a professor of law and religious science, and an expert pensman who taught him to read and write; so he read the Koran twice and learned it by heart, and he grew up, saying to the Emir, "O my father!" Moreover, the Governor used to go down with him to the tilting-ground and assemble horsemen and teach the lad the fashion of fight and fray, and the place to plant lance thrust and saber stroke; so that by the time he was

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fourteen years old he became a valiant wight and accomplished knight and gained the rank of Emir. Now it chanced one day that Aslan fell in with Ahmad Kamakim, the arch thief, and accompanied him as cup companion to the tavern, and behold, Ahmad took out the jeweled lantern he had stolen from the Caliph and, setting it before him, pledged the wine cup to its light, till he became drunken.

So Aslan said to him, "O captain, give me this lantern," but he replied, "I cannot give it to thee." Asked Aslan, "Why not?" and Ahmad answered, "Because lives have been lost for it." "Whose life?" inquired Aslan; and Ahmad rejoined, "There came hither a man who was made Chief of the Sixty; he was named Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, and he lost his life through this lantern." Quoth Aslan, "And what was that story, and what brought about his death?" Quoth Ahmad Kamakim, "Thou hadst an elder brother by name Habzalam Bazazah, and when he reached the age of sixteen and was inclined for marriage, thy father would have bought him a slave girl named Jessamine." And he went on to tell him the whole story from first to last of Habzalam Bazazah's illness and what befell Ala al-Din in his innocence. When Aslan heard this, he said in thought, "Haply this slave girl was my mother Jessamine, and my father was none other than Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat."

So the boy went out from him sorrowful, and met Calamity Ahmad, who at sight of him exclaimed, "Glory be to Him unto whom none is like!" Asked Hasan the Pestilence, "Whereat dost thou marvel, O my chief?" and Ahmad the Calamity replied, "At the make of yonder boy Aslan, for he is the likest of human creatures to Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat." Then he called the lad and said to him, "O Aslan, what is thy mother's name?" to which he replied, "She is called the damsel Jessamine;" and the other said, "Hark ye, Aslan, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear; for thy father was none other than Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat: but, O my son, go thou in to

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thy mother and question her of thy father." He said, "Hearkening and obedience," and, going in to his mother, put the question; whereupon quoth she, "Thy sire is the Emir Khalid!" "Not so," rejoined he, "my father was none other than Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat."

At this the mother wept and said, "Who acquainted thee with this, O my son?" and he answered, "Ahmad al-Danaf, Captain of the Guard." So she told him the whole story, saying, "O my son, the True hath prevailed and the False hath failed: know that Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat was indeed thy sire, but it was none save the Emir Khalid who reared thee and adopted thee as his son. And now, O my child, when thou seest Ahmad al-Danaf the captain, do thou say to him: I conjure thee, by Allah, O my chief, take my blood revenge on the murderer of my father Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat!"

So he went out from his mother and betaking himself to Calamity Ahmad, kissed his hand. Quoth the Captain, "What aileth thee, O Aslan?" and quoth he, "Now I know for certain that my father was Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, and I would have thee take my blood revenge on his murderer." He asked, "And who was thy father's murderer?" whereto Aslan answered, "Ahmad Kamakim, the arch thief." "Who told thee this?" inquired he, and Aslan rejoined, "I saw in his hand the jeweled lantern which was lost with the rest of the Caliph's gear, and I said to him: Give me this lantern! but he refused, saying: Lives have been lost on account of this, and told me it was he who had broken into the palace and stolen the articles and deposited them in my father's house."

Then said Ahmad al-Danaf, "When thou seest the Emir Khalid don his harness of war say to him: Equip me like thyself and take me with thee. Then do thou go forth and perform some feat of prowess before the Commander of the Faithful, and he will say to thee: Ask a boon of me, O Aslan! And do thou make answer: I ask of thee this boon, that thou take my blood revenge on my father's

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murderer. If he says: Thy father is yet alive and is the Emir Khalid, the Chief of the Police; answer thou: My father was Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, and the Emir Khalid hath a claim upon me only as the foster father who adopted me. Then tell him all that passed between thee and Ahmad Kamakim and say: O Prince of True Believers, order him to be searched and I will bring the lantern forth from his bosom."

Thereupon said Aslan to him, "I hear and obey"; and, returning to the Emir Khalid, found him making ready to repair to the Caliph's court, and said to him, "I would fain have thee arm and harness me like thyself and take me with thee to the Divan." So he equipped him and carried him thither.

Then the Caliph sallied forth of Baghdad with his troops, and they pitched tents and pavilions without the city; whereupon the host divided into two parties, and forming ranks fell to playing Polo, one striking the ball with the mall, and another striking it back to him. Now there was among the troops a spy, who had been hired to slay the Caliph; so he took the ball and smiting it with the bat drove it straight at the Caliph's face, when behold, Aslan fended it off and catching it drove it back at him who smote it, so that it struck him between the shoulders, and he fell to the ground. The Caliph exclaimed, "Allah bless thee, O Aslan!" and they all dismounted and sat on chairs.

Then the Caliph bade them bring the smiter of the ball before him and said, "Who tempted thee to do this thing, and art thou friend or foe?" Quoth he, "I am thy foe and it was my purpose to kill thee." Asked the Caliph, "And wherefor? Art not a Moslem?" Replied the spy, "No! I am a Rejecter."

So the Caliph bade them put him to death, and said to Aslan, "Ask a boon of me." Quoth he, "I ask of thee this boon, that thou take my blood revenge on my father's murderer." He said, "Thy father is alive and there he stands on his two feet." "And who is he?" asked Aslan; and the Caliph answered, "He is the Emir Khalid, Chief

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of Police." Rejoined Aslan, "O Commander of the Faithful, he is no father of mine, save by right of fosterage; my father was none other than Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat." "Then thy father was a traitor," cried the Caliph. "Allah forbid, O Commander of the Faithful," rejoined Aslan, "that the 'Trusty' should be a traitor! But how did he betray thee?" Quoth the Caliph, "He stole my habit and what was therewith."

Aslan retorted, "O Commander of the Faithful, Allah forfend that my father should be a traitor! But, O my lord, when thy habit was lost and found, didst thou likewise recover the lantern which was stolen from thee?" Answered the Caliph, "We never got it back;" and Aslan said, "I saw it in the hands of Ahmad Kamakim and begged it of him; but he refused to give it me, saying: Lives have been lost on account of this. Then he told me of the sickness of Habzalam Bazazah, son of the Emir Khalid, by reason of his passion for the damsel Jessamine, and how he himself was released from bonds, and that it was he who stole the habit and the lamp. So do thou, O Commander of the Faithful, take my blood revenge from my father on him who murdered him."

At once the Caliph cried, "Seize ye Ahmad Kamakim!" and they seized him; whereupon he asked, "Where be the Captain Ahmad al-Danaf?" And when he was summoned the Caliph bade him search Kamakim; so he put his hand into the thief's bosom and pulled out the lantern. Said the Caliph, "Come hither, thou traitor: whence hadst thou this lantern?" and Kamakim replied, "I bought it, O Commander of the Faithful!" The Caliph rejoined, "Where didst thou buy it?" Then they beat him till he owned that he had stolen the lantern, the habit, and the rest, and the Caliph said to him, "What moved thee to do this thing, O traitor, and ruin Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, the Trusty and Faithful?" Then he bade them lay hands on him and on the Chief of Police, but the Chief said, "O Commander of the Faithful, indeed I am unjustly treated; thou badest me hang him, and I had no knowl-

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edge of this trick, for the plot was contrived between the old woman and Ahmad Kamakim and my wife. I crave thine intercession, O Aslan."

So Aslan interceded for him with the Caliph, who said, "What hath Allah done with this youngster's mother?" Answered Khalid, "She is with me," and the Caliph continued, "I command that thou order thy wife to dress her in her own clothes and ornaments and restore her to her former degree, a lady of rank; and do thou remove the seals from Ala al-Din's house and give his son possession of his estate." "I hear and obey," answered Khalid; and, going forth, gave the order to his wife who clad Jessamine in her own apparel, whilst he himself removed the seals from Ala al-Din's house and gave Aslan the keys.

Then said the Caliph, "Ask a boon of me, O Aslan!" and he replied, "I beg of thee the boon to unite me with my father." Whereat the Caliph wept and said, "Most like thy sire was he that was hanged and is dead; but by the life of my forefathers, whoso bringeth me the glad news that he is yet in the bondage of this life, I will give him all he seeketh!" Then came forward Ahmad al-Danaf, and, kissing the ground between his hands, said, "Grant me indemnity, O Commander of the Faithful!" "Thou hast it," answered the Caliph; and Calamity Ahmad said, "I give thee the good news that Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, the Trusty, the Faithful is alive and well." Quoth the Caliph, "What is this thou sayest?" Quoth Al-Danaf, "As thy head liveth I say sooth; for I ransomed him with another, of those who deserved death; and carried him to Alexandria where I opened for him a shop and set him up as dealer in second-hand goods."

So they journeyed to Alexandria. They alighted without the city and Ala al-Din hid the women in a cavern, whilst he went into Alexandria and fetched them outer clothing, wherewith he covered them. Then he carried them to his shop and, leaving them in the "ben" [1] walked forth to fetch them the morning meal, and behold, he

[1] As opposed to the "but," or outer room.

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met Calamity Ahmad who chanced to be coming from Baghdad. He saw him in the street and received him with open arms, saluting him and welcoming him. Whereupon Ahmad al-Danaf gave him the good news of his son Aslan and how he was now come to the age of twenty: and Ala al-Din, in his turn, told the Captain of the Guard all that had befallen him from first to last, whereat he marveled with exceeding marvel. Then he brought him to his shop and sitting room where they passed the night; and next day he sold his place of business and laid its price with other moneys.

Now Ahmad al-Danaf had told him that the Caliph sought him; but he said, "I am bound first for Cairo, to salute my father and mother and the people of my house." So they all went to Cairo the God-guarded; and here they alighted in the street called Yellow, where stood the house of Shamat al-Din. Then Ala al-Din knocked at the door, and his mother said, "Who is at the door, now that we have lost our beloved for evermore?" He replied, "'Tis I! Ala al-Din!" whereupon they came down and embraced him. Then he sent his wives and baggage into the house, and entering himself with Ahmad al-Danaf, rested there three days, after which he was minded to set out for Baghdad. His father said, "Abide with me, O my son!" but he answered, "I cannot bear to be parted from my child Aslan." So he took his father and mother and set forth for Baghdad.

Now when they came there, Ahmad al-Danaf went in to the Caliph and gave him the glad tidings of Ala al-Din's arrival and told him his story; whereupon the King went forth to greet him, taking the youth Aslan and they met and embraced each other. Then the Commander of the Faithful summoned the arch thief Ahmad Kamakim and said to Ala al-Din, "Up and at thy foe!" So he drew his sword and smote off Ahmad Kamakim's head. Presently the Caliph held festival for Ala al-Din and, summoning the Kazis and witnesses, wrote the contract and married him to the Princess Husn Maryam. Moreover, the Caliph

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made Aslan Chief of the Sixty and bestowed upon him and his father sumptuous dresses of honor; and they abode in the enjoyment of all joys and joyance of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies.

A Man-hating Maiden

From the Sanskrit

THE ever worthy and famous King Vikramáditoya had a painter named Nagarasvámin, who enjoyed the revenues of a hundred villages, and surpassed Viśvakarman. That painter used every two or three days to paint a picture of a girl, and give it as a present to the king, taking care to exemplify different types of beauty.

Now, once on a time, it happened that that painter had, because a feast was going on, forgotten to paint the required girl for the king. And when the day for giving the present arrived, the painter remembered and was bewildered, saying to himself, "Alas! what can I give to the king?" And at that moment a traveler come from afar suddenly approached him and placed a book in his hand, and went off somewhere quickly. The painter out of curiosity opened the book, and saw within a picture of a girl on canvas. Inasmuch as the girl was of wonderful beauty, no sooner did he see her picture than he took it and gave it to the king, rejoicing that, so far from having no picture to present that day, he had obtained such an exceedingly beautiful one. But the king, as soon as he saw it, was astonished, and said to him, "My good fellow, this is not your painting, this is the painting of Viśvakarman; for how could a mere mortal be skillful enough to paint such beauty?" When the painter heard this, he told the king exactly what had taken place.

Then the king kept ever looking at the picture of the girl, and never took his eyes off it, and one night he saw in a

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dream a girl exactly like her, but in another land. But as he eagerly rushed to embrace her, who was eager to meet him, the night came to an end, and he was woke up by the watchman. When the king awoke, he was so angry at the interruption of his delightful interview with that maiden, that he banished that watchman from the city. And he said to himself, "To think that a traveler should bring a book, and that in it there should be the painted figure of a girl, and that I should in a dream behold this same girl apparently alive! All this elaborate dispensation of destiny makes me think that she must be a real maiden, but I do not know in what land she lives; how am I to obtain her?"

Full of such reflections, the king took pleasure in nothing, and burned with the fever of love so that his attendants were full of anxiety. And the warder Bhadráyudha asked the afflicted king in private the cause of his grief, whereupon he spoke as follows:

"Listen, I will tell you, my friend. So much at any rate you know, that that painter gave me the picture of a girl. And I fell asleep thinking on her, and I remember that in my dream I crossed the sea, and reached and entered a very beautiful city. There I saw many armed maidens in front of me, and they, as soon as they saw me, raised a tumultuous cry of 'Kill, kill.' Then a certain female ascetic came and with great precipitation made me enter her house, and briefly said to me this, 'My son, here is the man-hating princess Malayavatí come this way, diverting herself as she pleases. And the moment she sees a man, she makes these maidens of hers kill him: so I brought you in here to save your life.'

"When the female ascetic had said this, she immediately made me put on female attire; and I submitted to that, knowing that it was not lawful to slay those maidens. But, when the princess entered into the house with her maidens, I looked at her, and lo! she was the very lady that had been shown me in a picture. And I said to myself, 'Fortunate am I in that, after first seeing this lady in a picture, I now behold her again in flesh and blood, dear as my life.'

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"In the meanwhile the princess, at the head of her maidens, said to that female ascetic, 'We saw some male enter here.' The ascetic showed me, and answered, 'I know of no male; here is my sister's daughter, who is with me as a guest.' Then the princess seeing me, although I was disguised as a woman, forgot her dislike of men, and was at once overcome by love. She remained for a moment, with every hair on her body erect, motionless as if in thought, being, so to speak, nailed to the spot at once with arrows by Love, who had spied his opportunity. And in a moment the princess said to the ascetic, 'Then, noble lady, why should not your sister's daughter be my guest also? Let her come to my palace; I will send her back duly honored.' Saying this, she took me by the hand, and led me away to her palace. And I remember, I discerned her intention, and consented, and went there, and that sly old female ascetic gave me leave to depart.

"Then I remained there with that princess, who was diverting herself with the amusement of marrying her maidens to one another, and so forth. Her eyes were fixed on me, and she would not let me out of her sight for an instant, and no occupation pleased her in which I did not take part. Then those maidens, I remember, made the princess a bride, and me her husband, and married us in sport. And when we had been married, we entered at night the bridal chamber, and the princess fearlessly threw her arms round my neck. And then I told her who I was, and embraced her, and delighted at having attained her object, she looked at me and then remained a long time with her eyes bashfully fixed on the ground. And at that moment that villain of a watchman woke me up. So, Bhadráyudha, the upshot of the whole matter is that I can no longer live without that Malayavatí, whom I have seen in a picture and in a dream."

When the king said this, the warder Bhadráyudha perceived that it was a true dream, and he consoled the monarch, and said to him, "If the king remembers it all exactly, let him draw that city on a piece of canvas in order that some expedient may be devised in this matter." The mo-

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ment the king heard this suggestion of Bhadráyudha's, he proceeded to draw that splendid city on a piece of canvas, and all the scene that took place there. Then the warder at once took the drawing, and had a new monastery made, and hung it up there on the wall. And he directed that in relief-houses attached to the monastery, a quantity of food, with pairs of garments and gold, should be given to bards coming from distant countries. And he gave this order to the dwellers in the monastery, "If anyone comes here, who knows the city represented here in a picture, let me be informed of it."

In the meanwhile the fierce elephant of the rainy season with irresistible loud deep thunder-roar and long *ketaka* tusks came down upon the forest of the heats, a forest the breezes of which were scented with the perfume of the jasmine, in which travelers sat down on the ground in the shade, and trumpet-flowers bloomed. At that time the forest-fire of separation of that king Vikramáditya began to burn more fiercely, fanned by the eastern breeze. Then the following cries were heard among the ladies of his court, "Háralatá, bring ice! Chitrángí, sprinkle him with sandal-wood juice! Patralekhá, make a bed cool with lotus-leaves! Kandarpasená, fan him with plantain-leaves!" And in course of time the cloudy season terrible with lightning passed away for that king, but the fever of love burning with the sorrow of separation did not pass away.

Then the autumn with her open lotus-face, and smile of unclosed flowers, came, vocal with the cries of swans, seeming to utter this command, "Let travelers advance on their journey; let pleasant tidings be brought about absent dear ones; happy may their merry meetings be!" On a certain day in that season a bard, who had come from a distance, of the name of Sanvarasiddhi, having heard the fame of that monastery, built by the warder, entered it to get food. After he had been fed, and presented with a pair of garments, he saw that painting on the wall of the monastery. When the bard had carefully scanned the city delineated

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there he was astonished, and said, "I wonder who can have drawn this city? For I alone have seen it, I am certain, and no other; and here it is drawn by some second person." When the inhabitants of the monastery heard that, they told Bhadráyudha; then he came in person, and took that bard to the king. The king said to Sanvarasiddhi, "Have you really seen that city?" Then Sanvarasiddhi gave him the following answer:

"When I was wandering about the world, I crossed the sea that separates the isles, and beheld that great city Malayapura. In that city there dwells a king of the name of Malayasinha, and he has a matchless daughter, named Malayavatí, who used to abhor males. But one night she somehow or other saw in a dream a great hero in a convent. The moment she saw him, that evil spirit of detestation of the male sex fled from her mind, as if terrified. Then she took him to her palace, and in her dream married him, and entered with him the bridal chamber. And at that moment the night came to an end, and an attendant in her room woke her up. Then she banished that servant in her anger, and thinking upon that dear one, whom she had seen in her dream, seeing no way of escape owing to the blazing fire of separation, utterly overpowered by love, she never rose from her couch except to fall back upon it again with relaxed limbs. She was dumb, as if possessed by a demon, as if stunned by a blow, for when her attendants questioned her, she gave them no answer.

"Then her father and mother came to hear of it, and questioned her; and at last she was, with exceeding difficulty, persuaded to tell them what happened to her in the dream, by the mouth of a confidential female friend. Then her father comforted her, but she made a solemn vow that, if she did not obtain her beloved in six months, she would enter the fire. And already five months are past; who knows what will become of her? This is the story that I heard about her in that city."

When Sanvarasiddhi had told this story, which tallied so well with the king's own dream, the king was pleased at

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knowing the certainty of the matter, and Bhadráyudha said to him, "The business is as good as effected, for that king and his country own your paramount supremacy. So let us go there before the sixth month has passed away." When the warder had said this, King Vikramáditya made him inform Sanvarasiddhi of all the circumstances connected with the matter, and honored him with a present of much wealth, and bade him show him the wáy, and then he seemed to bequeath his own burning heat to the rays of the sun, his paleness to the clouds, and his thinness to the waters of the rivers, and having become free from sorrow, set out at once, escorted by a small force, for the dwelling-place of his beloved.

In course of time, as he advanced, he crossed the sea, and reached that city, and there he saw the people in front of it engaged in loud lamentation, and when he questioned them, he received this answer, " The Princess Malayavatí here, as the period of six months is at an end, and she has not obtained her beloved, is preparing to enter the fire." Then the king went to the place where the pyre had been made ready.

When the people saw him, they made way for him, and then the princess beheld that unexpected nectar-rain to her eyes. And she said to her ladies-in-waiting, " Here is that beloved come who married me in a dream, so tell my father quickly." They went and told this to her father, and then that king, delivered from his grief, and filled with joy, submissively approached the sovereign. At that moment the bard Sanvarasiddhi, who knew his time, lifted up his arm, and chanted aloud this strain, " Hail thou that with the flame of thy valor hast consumed the forest of the army of demons and Mlechchhas! Hail king, lord of the seven-sea-girt earth-bride! Hail thou that hast imposed thy exceedingly heavy yoke on the bowed heads of all kings, conquered by thee! Hail, Vishamaśíla, hail Vikramáditya, ocean of valor!"

When the bard said this, King Malayasinha knew that it was Vikramáditya himself that had come, and embraced his feet. And after he had welcomed him, he entered his palace

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with him, and his daughter Malayavatí, thus delivered from death. And that king gave that daughter of his to King Vikramáditya, thinking himself fortunate in having obtained such a son-in-law. And King Vikramáditya, when he saw in his arms, in flesh and blood, that Malayavatí, whom he had previously seen in a picture and in a dream, considered it a wonderful fruit of the wishing-tree of Siva's favor. Then Vikramáditya took with him his wife Malayavatí, like an incarnation of bliss, and crossed the sea resembling his long regretful separation, and being submissively waited upon at every step by kings, with various presents in their hands, returned to his own city Ujjayiní. And on beholding there that might of his, that satisfied freely every kind of curiosity, what people were not astonished, what people did not rejoice, what people did not make high festival?

Told by the Constable

From the Arabic

YE must know that a company, among whom was a friend of mine, once invited me to an entertainment; so I went with him, and when we came into his house and sat down on his couch, he said to me, "This is a blessed day and a day of gladness, and who is he that liveth to see the like of this day? I desire that thou practice with us and disapprove not our proceedings, for that thou hast been accustomed to fall in with those who offer this." I consented thereto and their talk happened upon the like of this subject. Presently, my friend, who had invited me, arose from among them and said to them, "Listen to me and I will acquaint you with an adventure which happened to me. There was a certain person who used to visit me in my shop, and I knew him not nor he knew me, nor ever in his life had he seen me; but he was wont, whenever he wanted a dirham or two, by way of loan, to come to me and ask me, without ac-

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quaintance or introduction between me and him, and I would give him what he required. I told none of him, and matters abode thus between us a long while till he began a-borrowing at a time ten or twenty dirhams, more or less. One day, as I stood in my shop, behold, a woman suddenly came up to me and stopped before me; and she was a presence as she were the full moon rising from among the constellations, and the place was a-light by her light. When I saw her, I fixed my eyes on her and stared in her face; and she fell to bespeaking me with soft voice. When I heard her words and the sweetness of her speech, I was drawn to her; and as soon as she saw that I longed for her, she did her errand and promising me a meeting, went away, leaving my thoughts occupied with her and fire a-flame in my heart. Accordingly I abode, perplexed and pondering my affair, the fire still burning in my heart, till the third day, when she came again and I could hardly credit her coming. When I saw her, I talked with her and cajoled her and courted her and craved her favor with speech and invited her to my house; but, hearing all this, she only answered, "I will not go up into anyone's house." Quoth I, "I will go with thee," and quoth she, "Arise and come with me." So I rose and putting into my sleeve a kerchief, wherein was a fair sum of silver and a considerable, followed the woman, who forewent me and ceased not walking till she brought me to a lane and to a door, which she bade me unlock. I refused and she opened it and led me into the vestibule. As soon as I had entered, she bolted the entrance door from within and said to me, "Sit here till I go in to the slave-girls and cause them enter a place whence they shall not see me." "'Tis well," answered I and sat down: whereupon she entered and was absent from me an eye-twinkling, after which she returned to me, without a veil, and straightway said, "Arise and enter in the name of Allah." So I arose and went in after her and we gave not over going till we reached a saloon. When I examined the place, I found it neither handsome nor pleasant, but desolate and dreadful without symmetry or cleanliness; indeed, it was loathsome

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to look upon and there was in it a foul smell. After this inspection I seated myself amiddlemost the saloon, misdoubting; and lo and behold! as I sat, there came down on me from the daïs a body of seven naked men, without other clothing than leather belts about their waists. One of them walked up to me and took my turban, while another seized my kerchief that was in my sleeve, with my money, and a third stripped me of my clothes; after which a fourth came and bound my hands behind my back with his belt. Then they all took me up, pinioned as I was, and casting me down, fell a-haling me toward a sink-hole that was there and were about to cut my throat, when suddenly there came a violent knocking at the door. As they heard the raps, they were afraid and their minds were diverted from me by affright; so the woman went out and presently returning, said to them, "Fear not; no harm shall betide you this day. 'Tis only your comrade who hath brought you your dinner." With this the new-comer entered, bringing with him a roasted lamb; and when he came in to them, he asked, "What is to do with you, that ye have tucked up sleeves and bag-trousers?" Replied they, "This is a head of game we've caught." As he heard these words, he came up to me and peering in my face, cried out and said, "By Allah, this is my brother, the son of my mother and father! Allah! Allah!" Then he loosed me from my pinion-bonds and bussed my head, and behold it was my friend who used to borrow silver of me. When I kissed his head, he kissed mine and said, "O my brother, be not affrighted"; and he called for my clothes and coin and restored all to me nor was aught missing. Also, he brought me a porcelain bowl full of sherbet of sugar, with lemons therein, and gave me to drink; and the company came and seated me at a table. So I ate with them and he said to me, "O my lord and my brother, now have bread and salt passed between us and thou hast discovered our secret and our case; but secrets with the noble are safe." I replied, "As I am a lawfully-begotten child and a well-born, I will not name aught of this nor denounce you!" They assured themselves of me

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by an oath; then they brought me out and I went my way, very hardly crediting but that I was of the dead. I lay ill in my house a whole month; after which I went to the Hammam and coming out, opened my shop and sat selling and buying as was my wont, but saw no more of that man or that woman till, one day, there stopped before my shop a young Turkoman, as he were the full moon; and he was a sheep-merchant and had with him a leathern bag, wherein was money, the price of sheep he had sold. He was followed by the woman, and when he stopped over against my shop, she stood by his side and cajoled him, and indeed he inclined to her with great inclination. As for me, I was dying of solicitude for him and began casting furtive glances at him and winked at him, till he chanced to look round and saw me signing to him; whereupon the woman gazed at me and made a signal with her hand and went away. The Turkoman followed her and I deemed him dead without a doubt; wherefore I feared with exceeding fear and shut my shop. Then I journeyed for a year's space and returning, opened my shop; whereupon, behold, the woman as she walked by came up to me and said, "This is none other than a great absence." I replied, "I have been on a journey"; and she asked, "Why didst thou wink at the Turkoman?" I answered, "Allah forfend! I did not wink at him." Quoth she, "Beware lest thou thwart me"; and went away. Awhile after this a familiar of mine invited me to his house and when I came to him, we ate and drank and chatted. Then he asked me, "O my friend, hath there befallen thee aught of sore trouble in the length of thy life?" Answered I, "Tell me first, hath there befallen thee aught?" He rejoined: Know that one day I espied a fair woman; so I followed her and sued her to come home with me. Quoth she, I will not enter anyone's house but my own; so come thou to my home, an thou wilt, and be it on such a day. Accordingly, on the appointed day her messenger came to me, proposing to carry me to her; and when he announced his purpose I arose and went with him, till we arrived at a goodly house and a great door. He opened the

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door and I entered, whereupon he bolted it behind me and would have gone in; but I feared with exceeding fear and foregoing him to the second door, whereby he would have had me enter, bolted it and cried out at him, saying, "By Allah, an thou open not to me, I will slay thee; for I am none of those whom thou canst readily cozen." "What deemest thou of cozening?" "Verily, I am startled by the loneliness of the house and the lack of any keeper at its door; for I see none appear." "O my lord, this is a private door." "Private or public, open to me." So he opened to me and I went out and had gone but a little way from the door when I met a woman, who said to me, "A long life was fore-ordained to thee; else hadst thou never come forth of yonder house." I asked, "How so?" and she answered, "Inquire of thy friend Such-an-one" (naming thee), "and he will acquaint thee with strange things." So, Allah upon thee, O my friend, tell me what befell thee of wondrous and marvelous, for I have told thee what befell me." "O my brother, I am bound by a solemn oath." "O my friend, false thine oath and tell me." "Indeed, I dread the issue of this." But he urged me till I told him all, whereat he marveled. Then I went away from him and abode a long while, without further news. One day, I met another of my friends who said to me, "A neighbor of mine hath invited me to hear singers," but I said: "I will not foregather with anyone." However, he prevailed upon me; so we repaired to the place and found there a person, who came to meet us and said, "Bismillah!" Then he pulled out a key and opened the door, whereupon we entered and he locked the door after us. Quoth I, "We are the first of the folk; but where be the singers' voices?" He replied, "They're within the house: this is but a private door; so be not amazed at the absence of the folk." My friend said to me, "Behold, we are two, and what can they dare to do with us?" Then he brought us into the house, and when we entered the saloon, we found it desolate exceedingly and dreadful of aspect. Quoth my friend, "We are fallen into a trap; but there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the

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Glorious, the Great!" And quoth I, "May God never requite thee for me with good!" Then we sat down on the edge of the daïs and suddenly I espied a closet beside me; so I peered into it and my friend asked me, "What seest thou?" I answered, "I see there wealth in store and corpses of murdered men galore. Look." So he looked and cried, "By Allah, we are down among the dead!" and we fell a-weeping, I and he. As we were thus, behold, four men came in upon us, by the door at which we had entered, and they were naked, wearing only leather belts about their waists, and made for my friend. He ran at them and dealing one of them a blow with his sword-pommel, knocked him down, whereupon the other three rushed upon him. I seized the opportunity to escape while they were occupied with him, and espying a door by my side, slipped into it and found myself in an underground room, without issue, even a window. So I made sure of death, and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Then I looked at the top of the vault and saw in it a range of glaze and colored lunettes; so I clambered up for dear life, till I reached the lunettes, and I out of my wits for fear. I made shift to remove the glass and scrambling out through the setting, found behind them a wall which I bestrode. Thence I saw folk walking in the street; so I cast myself down to the ground and Allah Almighty preserved me, and when I reached the face of earth, unhurt, the folk flocked round me and I acquainted them with my adventure. Now as Destiny decreed, the Chief of Police was passing through the market-street; so the people told him what was to do and he made for the door and bade raise it off its hinges. We entered with a rush and found the thieves, as they had thrown my friend down and cut his throat; for they occupied not themselves with me, but said, "Whither shall yonder fellow wend? Verily, he is in our grasp." So the Wali hent them with the hand and questioned them of their case, and they confessed against the woman and against their associates in Cairo. Then he took them and went forth, after he had locked up the house and

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sealed it; and I accompanied him till he came without the first house. He found the door bolted from within; so he bade raise it and we entered and found another door. This also he caused pull up, enjoining his men to silence till the doors should be lifted, and we entered and found the band occupied with new game, whom the woman had just brought in and whose throat they were about to cut. The Chief released the man and gave him back whatso the thieves had taken from him; and he laid hands on the woman and the rest and took forth of the house a mint of money, with which they found the purse of the Turkoman sheep-merchant. They at once nailed up the thieves against the house-wall, while, as for the woman, they wrapped her in one of her mantillas and nailing her to a board, set her upon a camel and went round about the town with her. Thus Allah razed their dwelling-places and did away from me that which I feared from them. All this befell while I looked on, and I saw not my friend who had saved me from them the first time, whereat I wondered to the utterest of wonderment. However, some days afterward, he came up to me, and indeed he had renounced the world and donned a Fakir's dress; and he saluted me and went away. Then he again began to pay me frequent visits and I entered into conversation with him and questioned him of the band and how he came to escape, he alone of them all. He replied, "I left them from the day on which Allah the Most High delivered thee from them, for that they would not obey my say; so I swore I would no longer consort with them." Quoth I, "By Allah, I marvel at thee, for that assuredly thou wast the cause of my preservation!" Quoth he, "The world is full of this sort; and we beseech the Almighty to send us safety, for that these wretches practice upon men with every kind of malpractice."

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The Clever Thief

From the Tibetan

IN olden times there lived in a hill-town a householder, who married a wife of his own caste. When a son was born unto him, he said to his wife, "Goodwife, now that there is born unto us a causer of debts and diminisher of means, I will take merchandise and go to sea." She replied, "Do so, lord." So he went to sea with his merchandise, and there he died.

After his wife had got over her mourning, she continued to live, partly supported by her handiwork, and partly by her relatives. Not far from her dwelt a weaver who was skilled in his art, and who by means of adroitness succeeded in everything. Seeing that he, by means of his art, had become well to do, she came to the conclusion that weaving was better than going to sea, for when a man did the latter, he needlessly exposed himself to misfortune. So she said to the weaver, "O brother, teach this nephew of yours to weave." He replied, "As that is right, I will do so." The youth became his apprentice, and in a short time learned the art of weaving, for he was sharp and quick.

As the weaver wore fine clothes, took good baths, and partook of delicate food, the youth said to him one day, "Uncle, how is it that although you and I are occupied in exactly the same kind of work, yet you have fine clothes, good baths, and delicate food, but I never have a chance of such things?" The weaver replied, "Nephew, I carry on two kinds of work. By day I practice weaving, but by night thieving."

"If that be so, uncle, I too will practice thieving."

"Nephew, you cannot commit a theft."

"Uncle, I can."

The weaver thought he would test him a little, so he took him to the market-place, purchased a hare there, and gave it to him, saying, "Nephew, I shall take a bath and then re-

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turn home. Meanwhile, go on roasting this hare." While he was taking his bath, the youth hastily roasted the hare and ate up one of its legs. When the weaver returned from his bath, he said, "Nephew, have you roasted the hare?"

"Yes!"

"Let's see it, then."

When the youth had brought the hare, and the weaver saw that it only had three legs, he said, "Nephew, where is the fourth leg gone?"

"Uncle, it is true that hares have four legs, but if the fourth leg is not there, it cannot have gone anywhere."

The weaver thought, "Although I have long been a thief, yet this lad is a still greater thief." And he went with the youth and the three-legged hare into a drinking-house and called for liquor. When they had both drunk, the weaver said, "Nephew, the score must be paid by a trick."

"Uncle, he who has drunk may play a trick; why should I, who have not drunk, do this thing?"

The weaver saw that the lad was a great swindler, so he determined to carry out a theft along with him.

They betook themselves to housebreaking. Once when they had made a hole into a house, and the weaver was going to pass his head through the opening, the youth said, "Uncle, although you are a thief, yet you do not understand your business. The legs should be put in first, not the head. For if the head should get cut off, its owner would be recognized, and his whole family would be plunged into ruin. Therefore put your feet in first."

When the weaver had done so, attention was called to the fact, and a cry was raised of "Thieves! thieves!" At that cry a great number of people assembled, who seized the weaver by his legs and began to pull him in. The youth, all by himself, could not succeed in pulling him out; but he cut off the weaver's head and got away with it.

The ministers brought the news to the king, saying, "Your Majesty, the thief was himself arrested at the spot where the housebreaking took place; but some one cut off his head and went away with it." The king said, "O

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friends, he who has cut off the head and gone away with it is a great thief. Go and expose the headless trunk at the crossway of the main street. Then place yourselves on one side, and arrest whoever embraces it and wails over it, for that will be the thief." Thereupon those servants of the king exposed the headless trunk at the crossway of the main street, and stationed themselves on one side. Thinking it would be wrong not to embrace his uncle and moan over him, the other thief assumed the appearance of a madman, and took to embracing men, women, carts, horses, bullocks, buffaloes, goats, and dogs. Afterwards, all men thinking he was mad, he pressed the headless trunk to his breast, wailed over it as long as he liked, and then went his way. The king was informed by his men that a madman had pressed the headless trunk to his bosom, and while he held it there had wailed over it, and had then gone away. The king said, "O friends, this man of a surety was the other thief. Ye have acted wrongly in not laying hands upon him. Therefore shall hands be laid upon you."

The other thief said to himself, "If I do not show honor to my uncle, I shall be acting badly." So he assumed the appearance of a carter, and drove a cart up to the spot laden with dry wood. When he arrived there, he upset the cart with its load of dry wood, unyoked the oxen, set the cart on fire, and then went away. The headless trunk was consumed by the flames. The king was informed by his men that the corpse was burned, and they told him all that had taken place. The king said, "O friends, the carter was certainly the thief. Ye have acted wrongly in not laying hands upon him. Therefore shall hands be laid upon you."

The thief said to himself, "I shall not be acting rightly unless I take soul-offerings to the burial-place for my uncle." So he assumed the appearance of a Brahman, and wandered from house to house collecting food. From what he collected he made five oblation-cakes, which he left at the burial-place, and then went his way. The king's men told him that a Brahman had wandered from house to house collecting food, and had then left five oblation-cakes on the

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spot where the body had been burned, and had then gone away. The king said, "O friends, that was really the thief. Ye have acted wrongly in not laying hands upon him."

The thief thought, "I shall be acting badly if I do not throw my uncle's bones into the Ganges." So he assumed the appearance of a Kāpālika,[1] went to the place where the corpse had been burned, smeared his body with ashes, filled a skull with bones and ashes, flung it into the Ganges, and then went his way. When the king had been told by his men all that had happened, he said, "O friends, this was really the thief. Ye have acted wrongly in not laying hands upon him."

From the "Kah-gyur." One of the oldest of popular tales is the story told by Herodotus (bk. ii. chap. 121) of the treasury of Rhampsinitus, which its builder's two sons are in the habit of robbing, until one of the thieves is caught in the snares set for their feet, whereupon the other, to prevent a discovery, cuts off his brother's head and runs away. The king gives orders to expose the corpse, and to keep watch so as to see whether anyone weeps and wails over it. The surviving son, forced by his mother's threats to look after his brother's burial, comes to the spot provided with skins of wine, makes the watchmen drunk, shaves off the right side of their beards, and carries away the dead body. Thereupon the king's daughter is obliged to yield herself to everyone who will relate to her the cleverest and most scandalous trick he has ever played in his life. The doer of the deed comes and betrays himself. But when the princess tries to seize him, he leaves in her hold, not his own hand, but that of the dead man. At last the king promises his daughter's hand to the doer of this deed, so the thief reveals himself and receives the princess. As a like legend is connected with the treasury of Hyrieus in Orchomenus, where Trophonius cut off the head of his brother Agamedes, and as according to Charax the same story is told also of the treasury of Augeias at Elis, we can easily understand why some commentators, like C. O. Müller, wish to claim the legend for the Greeks, while Buttmann wishes to trace it to the East.—TRANSLATOR.

[1] A skull-carrying Śiva-worshiper.

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The King Who Made Mats

From the Persian

IN ancient times there was in the country of Aberbaijan a king who cherished wisdom and administered justice; the tiller of his equity-loving nature kept the garden of his kingdom always clean of the chaff and trash of oppression, and preserved with the light of the torch of high-mindedness and largesses the surface of the breast of those that hoped and solicited, from the darkness of hardship and destitution. By means of his discernment he became acquainted with the worth and station due to men of profession, and always honored the high polish of the speculum of accomplishments and perfections with the throne of dignity and the place of respect.

One day whilst he was sitting in the palace of pomp and splendor, dispensing justice and retribution, and engaged in diving into the depths of the circumstances of the people, two men took hold of the collar of complaint. One of them had no trade, and the other was skillful and accomplished; and although the one who had no trade brought forward arguments and evidences in support of his claim, and it became clear that he was in the right, the king purposely turned the scales in favor of the clever fellow, and ordered the man without a trade to be punished.

The king happened to have a vizier equal to Plato in science, and who always drew upon the leaves of the book of circumstances with the pen of propriety of opinion and prudence of arrangement. Wondering at the decision of the king, he rose from his place and said:

"O thou leader of the caravan of prosperity of realms, by the blows of whose world-conquering scimiter the peace of the breasts of opponents is destroyed, and from the fruits of whose convoy of success the countries of the hearts of the amicable are made populous and flourishing, I have

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a request to make: first that the skyward-flying Homai [1] of your gracious disposition may pervade the atmosphere of compliance with my solicitation."

The king said, "Explain."

The vizier answered: "I pray that the life of this innocent youth, whose guiltlessness must be visible upon the mirror of your majesty's mind, may be spared for my sake; and that it might be disclosed to me why your majesty pardoned the guilty and condemned the innocent man?"

The king said: "I have absolved him, whom you call guilty, because I have arrived at the certainty that he is unblamable and has the right on his side. I also have reason to believe that this is not the proper time to elucidate the matter, but it will be done as soon as we are alone."

A short time afterwards the tree of the assembly shed the leaves and fruit of its multitude; the lamp of the apartment of privacy was trimmed and made bright, when the king spoke:

"Thou quintessence of acuteness, something happened to me once which plunged me into the sea of astonishment; since that time I made a vow to show favor to a man who has a profession, even if he should be blameworthy otherwise; and to punish and persecute him who has no trade or occupation, even if he should be my own son; so that the high and the low, seeing this, be induced to teach their children trades in conformity with their circumstances; because labor is too simple and gentle a refuge from misfortune and a means to attain prosperity.

"Know thou that when my father was yet walking in the garden of life, and was sitting upon the throne of happiness and government, on a certain day those who were present at the audience were discussing the advantages of trades and accomplishments, and although I had made myself acquainted with several sciences and accomplishments

[1] A bird of happy omen; it is said never to touch the ground, and every head it overshades will wear a crown.

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befitting a royal prince, I was anxious to learn yet some other trade. I determined that each of the tradesmen established in the city should display his skill before my eyes in order that I might apply myself to any trade which should captivate my fancy. After having seen them no one pleased me so much as mat-making, because the master of that art had introduced into the specimen which he worked all sorts of pretty figures.

"The instructor was engaged and I was taught. I assisted every day, until I became skillful in this business.

"One day I happened to entertain a desire of making an excursion of pleasure on the sea. I took leave of the king and embarked on board a boat with a number of courtiers. We amused ourselves for two days with fishing, but as all mortals are subject to the vicissitudes of fortune, on the third day a dreadful storm arose, the sea was lashed by it into furious waves, our boat went to pieces, and my companions became food for the palate of the whale of destiny.

"I was floating about on a broken plank with two of my associates for several days, erring like chaff in the ebb and tide of the abyss, and having our throats choked every moment by the gripe of mortal fear; we humbled and turned ourselves to the footstool of the Answerer of prayers, because nobody ever besought Him in vain.

"By this favor the wind drove the broken plank toward the shore, and all three of us, having landed safe and sound, made our way to an oasis which contained various fruits, and aromatic plants numerous beyond conception; we disported ourselves several days in that place, and during the night we took refuge on the trees, for fear of rapacious beasts, until we reached the end of the oasis and entered the desert, through the ups and downs of which we progressed for several days till the guide of our destinies led us into the city of Bagdad.

"I possessed several rings of great value, and went to the bazaar in the company of my friends in order to purchase food; having sold a ring, we entered the shop of a

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cook who had displayed a variety of dishes, and in whose service a handsome boy was busying himself; we handed to him a few dirhams to obtain some victuals. He cast a glance at us and said:

"'Young men, nobility and greatness shine from your foreheads. In this city it is considered disgraceful that youths like yourselves should be eating their food in the bazaar; in the neighborhood there is a very beautiful room, to which people like you are accustomed to resort. Do me the favor to adjourn to that place, that I may send there something worthy of you.'

"He sent his boy with us, whom we followed; after a short time we arrived at the house, stepped into the porch and entered the mansion, which we found to be very neat and variously ornamented. We wished to remain there.

"The boy, however, opened the door of another apartment and affirmed it to be a very pleasant place; I entered it with my companions, and we were beginning to amuse ourselves by contemplating the exquisite and wonderful paintings that ornamented its walls, when the boy said, 'I am going to bring you your meal.' As soon as he was gone the floor of the house began to move as if a great earthquake had happened. We wished to take to our heels, but the pavement separated, and all three of us were precipitated into a subterranean well which was dark like the graves of infidels, and black like their hearts.

"We lost all hope and were ready to die; we said: 'This time our adverse fortune has let fly the arrow of a strange event, and we have fallen into an uncommon place of destruction, so that the signification of our rescue will become as a word without meaning, like the name of the fabulous bird Unka.'

"That cook happened to be a Jew and an enemy of Mohammedans; it was his habit from a long time to make use of those compliments in order to decoy Mussulman foreigners to that house, whom he threw into that well, roasted their flesh, and sold it to other Mussulmans.

"Our necks were pledged in this affair and we were

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in apprehension what turn it would take when the same youth descended into the depth of the well, having a sword in his hand, and was about to murder us, when we said to him: 'Friend! What advantage is going to accrue to you from killing us, unhappy wretches! If gain be your object, we know the trade of mat-making which is very profitable in this town; bring the tools necessary for that occupation to this place, and we will make a mat every day.' The wretch hastened away and informed his master of our intention; they provided us with the required materials; we made a mat, for which they threw down to us every day a loaf of barley bread.

"We were continuing in this state for some time, and were despairing of our condition, when a stratagem occurred to me; I finished a mat with all possible care and ornaments, and wove into its borders the description of my circumstances in the Arabic language. This happened during the reign of Harun Alraschid, so I said if this carpet were to be offered to the Khalif a considerable sum might be gained.

"The greediness of the Jew having become an obstacle to his circumspection and to his regard of consequences, he carried the mat to the palace of the Khalif, who highly approved of it. But after he had examined it more minutely he discovered the explanation round its borders, and having by the perusal of it arrived at the state of things, he asked the Jew where he got the mat from, and whose work it was? He answered: 'I have a friend in Busra who sent it to me.' The Khalif said: 'Wait a little, that I may present thee with a reward worthy of it.'

"Having called for a servant he whispered something into his ear; the servant left, and having delivered me and my companions from the well, carried me to Harun. As soon as the Jew perceived us he began to tremble; the Khalif asked: 'Who are these?' The Jew struck with his hand the ring of the door of negation and said: 'I do not know.' The Khalif ordered the instruments of torture to be brought forward; when the Jew heard this he

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confessed everything. Harun commanded the Jew to be suspended upon the tree of punishment, and the poison of perdition to be poured into the throat of his existence.

"My prudent plan was highly approved of; I was sent to the bath and presented with rich clothes; the Khalif asked me about my adventures, which I related to him from beginning to end; and as the long service of my father had laid the Khalif under obligations to him, and as the Khalif knew that I was the apple of the eye of that monarch, he was the more kind to me and said: 'Be of good cheer! Please God, we will help you to go to your country.' After having entertained me for several days he presented me with nearly ten strings of camels and all sorts of articles which are necessary or useful to Grandees, and dispatched me with fifty men and a letter to my father, to my own country.

"When I arrived in my own capital the corpse of my father was just being carried out of the city. After having mourned over the death of my father I established myself upon the throne of dominion. Although my peace was for some time in jeopardy from the misfortune just mentioned, nevertheless it is by the help of a trade that I was saved. I have perfect confidence in skillful men and I have decided always to honor men that have a profession, and to despise those that have none."

The Bráhman Who Lost His Treasure

From the Sanskrit

THERE is a city named Śrávastí, and in it there lived in old time a king of the name of Prasenajit, and one day a strange Bráhman arrived in that city. A merchant, thinking he was virtuous, because he lived on rice in the husk, provided him a lodging there in the house of a Bráhman. There he was loaded by him every day with presents

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of unhusked rice and other gifts, and gradually by other great merchants also, who came to hear his story. In this way the miserly fellow gradually accumulated a thousand *dínárs*, and, going to the forest, he dug a hole and buried it in the ground, and he went every day and examined the spot. Now one day he saw that the hole, in which he had hidden his gold, had been re-opened, and that all the gold had gone. When he saw that hole empty, his soul was smitten, and not only was there a void in his heart, but the whole universe seemed to him to be void also. And then he came crying to the Bráhman, in whose house he lived, and when questioned, he told him his whole story: and he made up his mind to go to a holy bathing-place, and starve himself to death. Then the merchant, who supplied him with food, hearing of it, came there with others, and said to him, "Bráhman, why do you long to die for the loss of your wealth? Wealth, like an unseasonable cloud, suddenly comes and goes." Though plied by him with these and similar arguments, he would not abandon his fixed determination to commit suicide, for wealth is dearer to the miser than life itself. But when the Bráhman was going to the holy place to commit suicide, the king Prasenajit himself, having heard of it, came to him and asked him, "Bráhman, do you know of any mark by which you can recognize the place where you buried your *dínárs*?" When the Bráhman heard that, he said, "There is a small tree in the wood there, I buried that wealth at its foot." When the king heard that, he said, "I will find that wealth and give it back to you, or I will give it you from my own treasury, do not commit suicide, Bráhman." After saying this, and so diverting the Bráhman from his intention of committing suicide, the king intrusted him to the care of the merchant, and retired to his palace. There he pretended to have a headache, and sending out the door-keeper, he summoned all the physicians in the city by proclamation with beat of drum. And he took aside every single one of them and questioned him privately in the following words: "What patients have you here, and how many, and what medicine

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have you prescribed for each?" And they thereupon, one by one, answered all the king's questions. Then one among the physicians, when his turn came to be questioned, said this, "The merchant Mátṛidatta has been out of sorts, O king, and this is the second day, that I have prescribed for him *nágabalá*." When the king heard that, he sent for the merchant, and said to him, "Tell me, who fetched you the *nágabalá*?" The merchant said, "My servant, your highness." When the king got this answer from the merchant, he quickly summoned the servant and said to him, "Give up that treasure belonging to a Bráhman, consisting of a store of *dínárs*, which you found when you were digging at the foot of a tree for *nágabalá*." When the king said this to him, the servant was frightened and confessed immediately, and bringing those *dínárs* left them there. So the king for his part summoned the Bráhman and gave him, who had been fasting in the meanwhile, his *dínárs*, lost and found again, like a second soul external to his body.

The Duel of the Two Sharpers

From the Arabic

THERE was once, in the city of Baghdad, a man hight Al-Marwazi who was a sharper and ruined the folk with his rogueries and he was renowned in all quarters for knavery. He went out one day, carrying a load of small pebbles, and swore to himself that he would not return to his lodging till he had sold it at the price of raisins. Now there was in another city a second sharper, hight Al-Razi one of its worst, who went out the same day, bearing a load of round stones, anent which he too had sworn to himself that he would not sell it but at the price of sun-dried figs. So the twain fared on with that which was by them and ceased not going till they met in one of the khans, and one complained to other of what he had suffered

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on travel in quest of gain and of the little demand for his wares. Now each of them had it in mind to cheat his fellow; so the man of Marw said to the man of Rayy, "Wilt thou sell me that?" He said, "Yes," and the other continued, "And wilt thou buy that which is with me?" The man of Rayy consented; so they agreed upon this and each of them sold to his mate that which was with him in exchange for the other's; after which they bade farewell and both fared forth. As soon as the twain were out of sight, they examined their loads, to see what was therein, and one of them found that he had a load of small pebbles and the other that he had a load of round stones; whereupon each of them turned back in quest of his fellow. They met again in the khan and laughing at each other canceled their bargain; then they agreed to enter into partnership and that all they had of money and other good should be in common, share and share alike. Then quoth Al-Razi to Al-Marwazi, "Come with me to my city, for that 'tis nearer than thine." So he went with him, and when he arrived at his quarters, he said to his wife and household and neighbors, "This is my brother, who hath been absent in the land of Khorasan and is come back." And he abode with him in all honor for a space of three days. On the fourth day, Al-Razi said to him, "Know, O my brother, that I purpose to do something." The other asked, "What is it?" and the first answered, "I mean to feign myself dead and do thou go to the bazar and hire two porters and a bier. Then take me up and go about the streets and markets with my body and collect alms on my account.[1] Accordingly the Marw man repaired to the market and, fetching that which he sought, returned to the Rayy man's house, where he found his fellow cast down in the entrance-passage, with his beard tied and his eyes shut, and his complexion was paled and his limbs were loose. So he deemed him really dead and shook him but he spoke not; then he took a knife

[1] Moslems are bound to see True Believers decently buried, and the poor often beg alms for the funeral.

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and pricked his feet, but he budged not. Presently said Al-Razi, "What is this, O fool?" and said Al-Marwazi, "I deemed thou wast dead in very deed." Al-Razi cried, "Get thee to business, and leave funning." So he took him up and went with him to the market and collected alms for him that day till eventide, when he bore him back to his abode and waited till the morrow. Next morning, he again took up the bier and walked round with it as before, in quest of charity. Presently, the Chief of Police, who was of those who had given him alms on the previous day, met him; so he was angered and fell on the porters and beat them and took the dead body, saying, "I will bury him and win reward in Heaven." So his followers took him up and carrying him to the Police-officer, fetched grave-diggers, who dug him a grave. Then they brought him a shroud and perfumes and fetched an old man of the quarter, to wash him; so the Shaykh recited over him the appointed prayers and laying him on the bench, washed him and shrouded him. When the dead man found himself alone, he sprang up, as he were a Satan; and, donning the corpse-washer's dress, took the cups and water-can and wrapped them up in the napkins; then he clapped his shroud under his armpit and went out. The doorkeepers thought that he was the washer and asked him, "Hast thou made an end of the washing, so we may acquaint the Emir?" The sharper answered, "Yes," and made off to his abode, where he found the Marw man a-wooing his wife and saying to her, "By thy life, thou wilt never again look upon his face for the best reason that by this time he is buried: I myself escaped not from them but after toil and trouble, and if he speak, they will do him to death." Quoth she, "And what wouldst thou have of me?" and quoth he, "Be mine, for I am better than thy husband." Now when the Rayy man heard this, he rushed in upon them, and when Al-Marwazi saw him, he wondered at him and said to him, "How didst thou make thine escape?" Accordingly he told him the trick he had played and they abode talking of that which they had collected from the folk, and indeed they had

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gotten great store of money. Then said the man of Marw, "In very sooth, mine absence hath been prolonged and lief would I return to my own land." Al-Razi said, "As thou willest"; and the other rejoined, "Let us divide the moneys we have made and do thou go with me to my home, so I may show thee my tricks and my works." Replied the man of Rayy, "Come to-morrow, and we will divide the coin." So the Marw man went away and the other turned to his wife and said to her, "We have collected us great plenty of money, and the dog would fain take the half of it; but such thing shall never be, for my mind hath been changed against him, since I heard him making love to thee; now, therefore, I propose to play him a trick and enjoy all the money; and do thou not oppose me." She replied, "'Tis well;" and he said to her, "To-morrow, at peep o' day I will feign myself dead, and do thou cry aloud and tear thy hair, whereupon the folk will flock to me. Then lay me out and bury me; and, when the folk are gone away from the grave, dig down to me and take me; and fear not for me, as I can abide without harm two days in the tomb-niche." Whereto she made answer, "Do e'en whatso thou wilt." Accordingly, when it was the dawn-hour, she bound his beard and spreading a veil over him, shrieked aloud, whereupon the people of the quarter flocked to her, men and women. Presently, up came Al-Marwazi, for the division of the money, and hearing the keening asked, "What may be the news?" Quoth they, "Thy brother is dead"; and quoth he in himself, "The accursed fellow cozeneth me, so he may get all the coin for himself, but I will presently do with him what shall soon re-quicken him." Then he tore the bosom of his robe and bared his head, weeping and saying, "Alas, my brother, ah! Alas, my chief, ah! Alas, my lord, ah!" And he went in to the men, who rose and condoled with him. Then he accosted the Rayy man's wife and said to her, "How came his death to occur?" Said she, "I know nothing except that, when I arose in the morning, I found him dead." Moreover, he questioned her of the money which was with her, but she cried, "I have no knowledge

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of this and no tidings." So he sat down at his fellow-sharper's head, and said to him, "Know, O Razi, that I will not leave thee till after ten days with their nights, wherein I will wake and sleep by thy grave. So rise and don't be a fool." But he answered him not, and the man of Marw drew his knife and fell to sticking it into the other's hands and feet, purposing to make him move; but he stirred not and he presently grew weary of this and determined that the sharper was really dead. However, he still had his suspicions and said to himself, "This fellow is falsing me, so he may enjoy all the money." Therewith he began to prepare the body for burial and bought for it perfumes and whatso was needed. Then they brought him to the washing-place and Al-Marwazi came to him; and, heating water till it boiled and bubbled and a third of it was evaporated, fell to pouring it on his skin, so that it turned bright red and lively blue and was blistered; but he abode still motionless. Presently they wrapped him in the shroud and set him on the bier, which they took up and bearing him to the burial-place, placed him in the grave-niche and filled in the earth; after which the folk dispersed. But the Marw man and the widow abode by the tomb, weeping, and ceased not sitting till sundown, when the woman said to him, "Come, let us hie us home, for this weeping will not profit us, nor will it restore the dead." He replied to her, "By Allah, I will not budge hence till I have slept and waked by this tomb ten days with their nights!" When she heard this his speech, she feared lest he should keep his word and his oath, and so her husband perish; but she said in her mind, "This one dissembleth: an I leave him and return to my house, he will tarry by him a little while and go away." And Al-Marwazi said to her, "Arise, thou, and hie thee home." So she arose and repaired to her house, while the man of Marw abode in his place till the night was half spent, when he said to himself, "How long? Yet how can I let this knavish dog die and lose the money? Better I open the tomb on him and bring him forth and take my due of him by dint of grievous beating and torment." Accordingly, he dug him

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up and pulled him forth of the grave; after which he betook himself to a garden hard by the burial-ground and cut thence staves and palm-fronds. Then he tied the dead man's legs and laid on to him with the staff and beat him a grievous beating; but the body never budged. When the time grew longsome on him, his shoulders became a-weary and he feared lest some one of the watch passing on his round should surprise and seize him. So he took up Al-Razi and carrying him forth of the cemetery, stayed not till he came to the Magians' mortuary-place and casting him down in a Tower of Silence, rained heavy blows upon him till his shoulders failed him, but the other stirred not. Then he seated him by his side and rested; after which he rose and renewed the beating upon him; and thus he did till the end of the night, but without making him move. Now, as Destiny decreed, a band of robbers whose wont it was, when they had stolen anything, to resort to that place and there divide their loot, came thither in early-dawn, according to their custom; they numbered ten and they had with them much wealth which they were carrying. When they approached the Tower of Silence, they heard a noise of blows within it and their captain cried, "This is a Magian whom the Angels are tormenting." So they entered the cemetery and as soon as they arrived over against him, the man of Marw feared lest they should be the watchmen come upon him, therefore he fled and stood among the tombs. The robbers advanced to the place and finding the man of Rayy bound by the feet and by him some seventy sticks, wondered at this with exceeding wonder and said, "Allah confound thee! This was a miscreant, a man of many crimes; for earth hath rejected him from her womb, and by my life, he is yet fresh! This is his first night in the tomb and the Angels were tormenting him but now; so whoso of you hath a sin upon his soul, let him beat him, by way of offering to Almighty Allah." The robbers said, "We be sinners one and all"; so each of them went up to the corpse and dealt it about an hundred blows, one saying the while, "This is for my father!" and another laid on to him crying, "This is for my grandfather!" whilst a third

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muttered, "This is for my brother!" and a fourth exclaimed, "This is for my mother!" And they gave not taking turns at him and beating him till they were weary, whilst Al-Marwazi stood laughing and saying in himself, "'Tis not I alone who have entered into default against him. There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Then the robbers applied themselves to sharing their loot wherein was a sword which caused them to fall out anent the man who should take it. Quoth the Captain, "'Tis my rede that we make proof of it; so, an it be a fine blade, we shall know its worth, and if it be worthless we shall know that"; whereto they said, "Try it on this corpse, for it is fresh." So the Captain took the sword and drawing it, brandished and made a false cut with it; but, when the man of Rayy saw this, he felt sure of death and said in his mind, "I have borne the washing-slab and the boiling water and the pricking with the knife-point and the grave-niche and its straitness and all this, trusting in Allah that I might be delivered from death, and indeed I have been delivered; but the sword I may not suffer, seeing that one stroke of it will make me a dead man." So saying, he sprang to his feet and seizing a thigh-bone of one departed, shouted at the top of his voice, "O ye dead ones, take them to yourselves!" And he smote one of them, whilst his mate of Marw smote another and they cried out at them and buffeted them on their neck-napes: whereupon the robbers left that which was with them of loot and ran away; and indeed their wits took flight for terror and they ceased not running till they came forth of the Magians' mortuary-ground and left it a parasang's length behind them, when they halted, trembling and affrighted for the muchness of that which had befallen them of fear and awe of the dead. As for Al-Razi and Al-Marwazi, they made peace each with other and sat down to share the spoil. Quoth the man of Marw, "I will not give thee a dirham of this money, till thou pay me my due of the moneys that be in thy house." And quoth the man of Rayy, "I will do naught of the kind, nor will I withdraw this from aught of my due." So they fell out there-

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upon and disputed each with other and either of the twain went saying to his fellow, "I will not give thee a dirham!" Wherefore words ran high between them and the brawl was prolonged. Meanwhile, when the robbers halted, one of them said to the others, "Let us go back and see"; and the Captain said, "This thing is impossible of the dead; never heard we that they came to life in such way. Return we and take our moneys, for that the dead have no need of money." And they were divided in opinion as to returning: but presently one said, "Indeed, our weapons are gone and we may not prevail against them and will not draw near the place: only let one of us go look at it, and if he hear no sound of them, let him suggest to us what we shall do." At this they agreed that they should send a man of them and assigned him for such mission two parts of the plunder. Accordingly he returned to the burial-ground and gave not over going till he stood at the door of the Tower of Silence, when he heard the words of Al-Marwazi to his fellow, "I will not give thee a single dirham of the money!" The other said the same and they were occupied with brawling and abuse and talk. So the robber returned in haste to his mates, who said, "What is behind thee?" Quoth he, "Get you gone and run for your lives, O fools, and save yourselves: much people of the dead are come to life and between them are words and brawls." Hereat the robbers fled, whilst the two sharpers returned to the man of Rayy's house and made peace and added the robbers' spoil to the moneys they had gained and lived a length of time.

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The Lady and the Kazi

From the Persian

DURING the reign of Sultan Mahomed Subaktaghin in Ghaznin, a man was traveling from Aderbaijan to Hindustan; when he arrived in Ghaznin, he was much pleased with the climate, so he decided to settle there; and as he had great experience in commerce, he went to the bazaar and became a broker and was very successful in business.

He intended to marry, and fortune being propitious to him, he entered into a matrimonial alliance with a virtuous and handsome young woman; by degrees his business also became more and more flourishing, and having accumulated much wealth, he was numbered among the richest merchants.

He wished to extend his transactions to Hindustan and sent goods to that country; but as he had no connections or intimate friends in Ghaznin who might take charge of his wife till his return, this thought troubled him greatly, and as he considered it the first duty of a respectable man to be on his guard on this subject, and not to hazard his reputation and honor, he determined not to start on his journey till he had provided an asylum for his spouse.

Now since the Kazi of the city was a man noted for his piety, virtue, and honor, he said to himself: "I cannot do better than intrust the keeping of my wife to so godly and honest a man, who is a magistrate and a churchman, and enjoys the esteem of the rich and the poor; let her remain in his house till I return from my journey."

He hastened to make his obeisance to the Kazi and said: "O President of the judgment seat of truth and piety, by whose talented and searching disposition the explanations of religious and secular questions are flowing, and by whose essentially holy authority and intelligence the commendatory and prohibitory laws are corroborated, may

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your righteous opinion always remain the guide of those who seek to walk in the strait way of piety. I, your humble servant, am an inhabitant of this city, and it is my intention to undertake a journey to Hindustan; I have a young wife, the leaves of whose modesty and virtue are bound up in the splendid volume of her natural excellence; but as I have nobody who might protect and take care of her, and also because she might fall under the obloquy of false tongues, I flatter myself that she might find a refuge under the guardianship of your lordship."

The Kazi placed the seal of acquiescence upon this request and said that he would take care of her. That man furnished his wife with all the necessary expenses for one year, delivered her to the Kazi, and started on his journey.

The lady spent her whole time in the house of the Kazi in prayer and devotion, and nearly a whole year had elapsed without the breeze of a single profane glance having blown on the vernal abode of her face, and without her having ever heard the bird of a voice in the foliage of her ears; till one day the Kazi unexpectedly made his appearance and looked at her, when he perceived her Leila-like beauty sitting within the black mansion of her musked ringlets, and her sweet tenderness mounted upon the palfrey [1] of attractiveness and melancholy, the Kazi's intellect became troubled, and Ferhad-like [2] he began to dig the Bistún of his soul, which was melting and burning in the censer of distraction.

He was anxious to make overtures against her virtue, but being aware of her whole nature and chastity, he durst not attempt it; nevertheless, when the wife of the Kazi one day absented herself to visit the public baths and had left the lady alone to take care of the house, he was so completely dominated by his unlawful passion that he threw skyward the turban of concupiscence and said:

[1] In the text, "Gulgún," the name of the horse which Lady Shirin rides, in the poem of "Ferhad and Shirin."

[2] Ferhad dug in the mountain Bistún and sculptured Shirin's likeness.

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"The desired game for which I looked in the skies,
Has now on earth fallen into the net of my good fortune."

The Kazi locked the door and commenced his stratagem by complimenting her modesty; and continued to address her in the following strain:

"Virtuous lady! The reputation of my honesty and piety has spread in the world and penetrated all corners, neither could the charms of the paradisaical Houris seduce my righteous disposition from the road of firm determination, or impel me to transgress the laws of purity; then why do you avoid me so much? If the absence of intelligence and of the knowledge of the true state of things keep your face veiled with the curtain of bashfulness, my obedience to the laws of God, and my fear of eternal punishment at the day of resurrection, prohibit me from allowing the fire of sensuality to be kindled within me.

"I would not disturb your peace even with the sinful glance of my eye.

"Be of good cheer and throw aside the veil of apprehension from your face, because there is no danger of sinning; and although it is against the law of God and the Prophet to exact services from guests, yet since you belong to the house and I am dependent on your kindness, I would request you to procure me some food, for I am hungry."

The woman placed the prohibitory veil of bashfulness on her face, and waited upon the Kazi with all due modesty; she put the meal before him and retired to a corner; the Kazi had provided himself with a drug which deprives of his senses anyone who tastes it, and said to the woman: "You know that three kinds of persons will be rejected from the mercy of God on the day of resurrection, and will be subjected to endless tortures; firstly, he who eats alone; secondly, he who sleeps alone; and thirdly, he who travels alone; and till now it has never happened to me that I did any of these three things; since I am now eating alone and anyone who does this has the devil for his com-

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panion, and to whomsoever this happens, his faith will be endangered; why should you not, in order to free me from the snares of the devil, defile your hands by partaking of this meal?"

He did not cease to invite her till she sat down near the table and helped herself to some food. The Kazi took this opportunity to throw some of the medicine into the plate; after the unfortunate woman had swallowed a few morsels she felt herself fainting, and wanting to get up from the table, her feet refused to bear her, and she fell senseless to the ground.

The Kazi quickly gathered up the articles that were on the table and meditated worse things; when he suddenly heard noises on the outside; this greatly disturbed him, and he was much embarrassed where to conceal the woman so that nobody might discover the circumstance.

Now the Kazi happened to keep his money and valuables in a subterranean room which was situated exactly under the apartment in which he was. Nobody knew anything about this place except himself; he opened the trapdoor, thrust the woman into it and again covered the floor with the carpet; then he went out and saw that his family had returned from the bath.

The Kazi said: "Why did you all leave the house empty?" They answered: "We have left the wife of the merchant to take care of the place." The Kazi said: "It is two hours since I arrived at home and have seen no one; why do you trust such a person? She may have taken away something." They were all astonished and said that she was not such a woman, and wondered what had become of her.

While this talk was going on the husband of that woman, having just returned from his journey to Hindustan, came at that moment to the house of the Kazi to inquire for his wife. The Kazi said: "It is some time since your wife has left the house without giving us notice or asking permission."

The merchant said: "O Kazi! This is not the time to

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crack jokes; deliver to me my wife." The Kazi swore an oath and affirmed that he was in earnest. The merchant said: "I am too well acquainted with the nature and disposition of my wife ever to believe her to be capable of such a trick; there must be something else the matter."

The Kazi got angry and replied: "It is I who must be offended, you foolish man; why do you talk nonsense and uselessly insult us? Go and see where your wife is!"— As the merchant was greatly attached to his spouse, and the smoke of distress was beginning to ascend from the oven of his brains, he tore the collar of patience and hastened to make his complaint to the Sultan, and prostrating himself upon the carpet of supplication he said:

"Oh, exalted and happy monarch,
May felicity be the servant of your palace.
The Kazi of the city has done me injustice,
Greater than the blast of a tornado of the west.
If it be permitted I shall explain
The injustice of that mean-spirited wretch."

The Sultan said: "Bring forward your complaint that I may become acquainted with it." The merchant said: "I am a native of Aderbaijan, and it was the fame of the justice and protection which the poor obtain at the hands of your majesty that induced me to settle in this country, and it is some time since I dwelt under the shadow of your majesty's protection. I had a beautiful and modest wife, and intending to travel to Hindustan, I committed her one year ago to the charge of the Kazi. Now I have again returned, but he, being deceived by his covetousness, refuses to give up to me my wife."

The Sultan ordered the Kazi to be brought into his presence, but the latter, suspecting what would happen, suborned by the promise of money several vagabonds to testify, when called upon, that they had seen the merchant's wife absent herself from the Kazi's house three months ago.

When the Kazi arrived, the Sultan asked him what kind of a complaint the merchant had against him.

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The Kazi said: "May the torch of your majesty's welfare be luminous, and the castle of opposition ruinous! This man has intrusted his wife to me and it is nearly three months since she went out of my house without giving any notice, and up to this time she has not come back; we have been unable to discover any traces of her."

The merchant answered: "This is contrary to the nature of my wife, and I do not believe it." The Sultan said: "Who are the witnesses?"

The Kazi answered that several neighbors and householders of the vicinity were acquainted with the fact, and wrote down their names; at a sign of the Sultan to a Chamberlain, these witnesses were brought in, and they confirmed the assertion of the Kazi.

Then the Sultan said to the merchant: "As the Kazi has established his assertion by witnesses, your complaint falls to the ground." Upon this the merchant retired disappointed.

The Sultan was in the habit of perambulating the bazaars and streets of the city occasionally, in disguise, to mix among the people, and thus discover what they thought of him. That night he left his palace according to his wont and walked about.

He happened to pass near the door of a shop where boys were playing the game of "The King and his Vizier." One of the children was made king, and said to the others: "I am king and you are all under my authority; you must not seek to evade my commands." Another boy said: "If you give unjust judgments like Sultan Mahomed we shall soon depose you." The other asked: "What injustice has Sultan Mahomed done?"

He answered: "To-day the affair of a merchant came before the Sultan. This merchant had confided his wife to the keeping of the Kazi, and he hid her in his own house; the Sultan called for witnesses, when the Kazi gained his cause by bringing into court witnesses whom he had previously bribed. It is a great pity that people should have the administration of justice in their hands who

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are unable to distinguish between right and wrong; had I been in the place of the Sultan I would very quickly have discovered the truth or falsehood of the witnesses of the Kazi."

When the Sultan had heard the conversation of these children he sighed and returned to his palace in great agitation of mind; next morning as soon as it was daylight he sent somebody to fetch the boy. The boy came and the Sultan received him in a very friendly way, saying: "This day you shall be my Lieutenant the whole day from morning till evening, and I intend to allow you to sit in judgment and to act entirely according to your own will." Then the Sultan whispered to a Chamberlain to invite the merchant again to state his complaint against the Kazi.

The merchant came and did so; the witnesses were again called for, whom the Kazi again brought into court. The Kazi wished to take a seat, but the boy said: "Ho, Master Kazi! It is a long time since the leading strings of judicial power, and the power of tying and untying the knotty points of law, have been in your hands; why do you seem to be so ignorant of legal customs? You have been brought into this court as a party in a lawsuit and not as an assessor; it is the rule that you should stand below on an equality with your accuser, till the court breaks up, and then you should obey whatever its decision might be."

The Kazi went and placed himself near the merchant; then the merchant proffered his complaint, and the Kazi again affirmed that the woman had abandoned the house three months ago.

The boy said: "Have you any witnesses?" The Kazi beckoned to his followers and said: "These are the witnesses."

The boy called one of the witnesses and asked him in a subdued voice whether he had seen the woman? He said: "Yes." Then he inquired further what signs there were on her person, stature, or face? The man became embarrassed and said: "She has a mole on her forehead,

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one of her teeth is wanting, she is of a fresh complexion, tall and slender."

The boy asked: "What time of day was it when she went away from the house of the Kazi?" He answered: "Morning." The boy said: "Remain in this place."

Then he called for another witness of whom he also asked the description, and got the following answer: "She is of low stature, lean, her cheeks are white and red, she has a mole near the lips, and she left the house in the afternoon."

Having placed this individual in another corner, he called for a third witness whose evidence contradicted both the others, and gradually he examined all of them, and found them disagreeing in everything.

The Sultan was sitting by the side of the boy and heard all; when the hearing of the witnesses was completed, the boy said: "You God-forgetting wretches, why do you give false evidence? Let the instruments of torture be brought forward that we may find out the truth." As soon as they heard the name of torture mentioned, they all offered to say the truth, and acknowledged themselves to be a set of poor fellows whom the Kazi had bribed with a sum of money and had instructed what to say; they also confessed that they knew nothing whatever about the woman.

The boy called the Kazi, and asked him what he had to say in this business; the Kazi commenced to tremble all over his body, and said: "The truth is as I have stated it." The boy said: "Our Kazi is a bold man, and his haughtiness hinders him from acknowledging the truth; the instruments of punishment ought to be made use of."

When the Kazi heard this, the fear of torture greatly distressed him, and he confessed the truth. Upon this the boy kissed the floor of good manners with the lips of obedience, and said: "The remainder of this affair is to be settled by the Sultan." The Sultan was much pleased with the acuteness and intelligence of the boy, and ordered the Kazi to be beheaded and all his property to be given to

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the wife of that merchant. The boy was treated kindly and educated, until by degrees he won the whole confidence of the Sultan and became one of his greater favorites.

Mahaushadha

From the Tibetan

ONE day the king went into the park with his wives, and enjoyed himself there together with them. One of them took off a string of pearls worth a hundred thousand pieces of money and hung it on a spray of an aśoka tree. While sporting with the king she forgot about it and left it there. At midnight, after she had gone back to the palace with the king, she remembered that she had left her necklace in the forest. Meanwhile it had been carried off to the top of a tree by a female monkey.

The king ordered his men to hasten to the forest and bring back the necklace. They went there, but they did not find it. Now a beggar had gone there in search of the remnants of the food of which other men had made a meal. As he came forth from the forest after partaking of such food, the king's men arrested him. As no one else was to be seen there, they called on him to render up the necklace. Although he protested that he had not taken it, had not even seen it, yet he was beaten with fists and stakes, and then thrown into prison.

Tormented by hunger, he reflected that, unless he contrived some cunning way of escape he would die there of starvation. So he said to the jailer that he had, it was true, taken the pearl necklace, but that he had given it to such and such a young merchant. Him also the king's men summoned, and the two men were set fast connected by wooden fetters.

The merchant used to receive from home dainty food. While he was partaking of it the beggar asked him for

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some. But the merchant reviled him, saying, "It is all very well for you to accuse me of theft in order that I may nourish you with my food. I will give you none of it." And having thus spoken, he ate it all up.

After this, when the merchant wished to change his place, and said, "Let us stand up and move," the beggar replied, "I will not listen to your words; I shall not get up." Then said the merchant, "Henceforward will I behave so that you will be contented." Thus with friendly words and with an oath he won over the beggar, and was able to do as he wished.

The next day the merchant sent home orders to provide in future food enough for two persons. Thereat the beggar was highly pleased, and he reflected that in former times he used to wander about the whole city without being able to find the means of filling his belly, but now food and drink in plenty were at hand.

While they so enjoyed themselves a further desire arose within them. They thought that in order to have still more pleasure they must call in a lute-player. So the beggar accused a lute-player also of having taken the string of pearls. Then the king's men cast him also into the prison.

After some time the others besought the beggar to find some means whereby they might become free, saying that in that case he should want for nothing. He promised to do so, and bethought himself that no one could be of use except Mahaushadha. So he told the king's men that Mahaushadha's son had likewise taken part in the affair, and they sent for him also.

When Mahaushadha heard that his son had been imprisoned, he felt that he must certainly go to the palace, for if he did not do so his son would fret himself. On arriving there, he asked the king what offense his son had committed. The king replied that he had been imprisoned on the testimony of the beggar with respect to the stolen pearl necklace. When Mahaushadha had become fully acquainted with the contrivance of the captives, he said to the king, "The theft has not been committed by any of these

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people. Let them all go free on my word." So they were released.

After this he went out to the park, and came to the spot, to the very tree, where they had been before. When he looked closely at the tree, he perceived a female monkey sitting at the top of it. Then he felt sure that this animal had taken the string of pearls, and that it must be enticed to come down by some artifice. So he asked the king to go there with his wife, and when there, to hang a necklace round her neck. When that was done, the monkey, as it sat on the tree-top, hung the pearl necklace round its neck. Then Mahaushadha told the king's wife to dance. When she did so, the monkey on the tree-top also began to dance; but still the string of pearls did not fall from off its neck. In order to bring that about, Mahaushadha asked the king to make his wife, as she danced, hang down her head. Then the monkey also began to dance about with its head hanging down, whereupon the string of pearls fell down from off its neck. Full of joy, the king embraced Mahaushadha and bestowed much property upon him.

Avicenna and the Observant Young Man

From the Turkish

WHEN Aboo Sinna[1] was in Ispahan, in the three hundred and ninety-eighth year of the Hedjreh, that powerful person, Alai ed Dowlet Aboo Jaafer Delimee was its governor. At that time distinctions and marks of regard were bestowed on Aboo Sinna without ceasing. One day the Sultan took from his waist a rich and valuable belt, and bestowed it upon that excellent Sheik. This the latter afterwards gave to one of the Sultan's own attendants. The Sultan, observing it on the individual, inquired how

[1] Avicenna, the foremost Arabic physician and philosopher, who lived 980–1037.

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he came by it. The man replied that he had received it from the Sheik as a present. The Sultan was greatly displeased and rebuked the attendant severely for having accepted it; at the same time he swore to take the Sheik's life for caring so little for his gifts. But one of the Sheik's friends giving him information of what had occurred, he acted on the proverb which says, "Separate from him whom you cannot withstand," and forthwith departed from that country in disguise. On coming to another city and dismounting at a caravanserai, he walked to the market-place in search of provisions. Whilst thus engaged, he observed a youth of talent and science, around whom a crowd of people were collected asking him for remedies. The youth in turn showed to each one the remedies for his complaint, and the means of recovery from his malady. Presently a woman made her appearance, bearing a white vase in her hand, which she showed to him. The youth said that the vase belonged to a Jew; which the woman confirmed. Afterwards he said that she had eaten that day half an egg and some curds; and this the woman also avowed. The young man next asked if the woman did not then reside in a filthy part of the city; and the woman answered affirmatively. Aboo Sinna, observing the youth's superior talents, was astonished at his language and the remedies which he prescribed. The young man's eyes happened to meet those of Aboo Sinna; and making him a secret sign of recognition, he addressed the Sheik with deference and said, "You are he who has received that divine science, and are that unequaled and most perfectly excellent person, the Reis Aboo Ali bin Sinna, who fled from Ispahan through fear of the Sultan Alai ed Dowlet, and are come to this place with the intention of residing here." Then feeling kindly towards the Sheik, he left all his business, kissed the Sheik's feet, took his hand in his, and led him to his own house. After receiving from the young man all the usual attentions of a servant, the Sheik asked him whence he had drawn his conclusions, and how he knew that the vase belonged to a Jew. The youth

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replied, " I observed the old woman's tunic, and knew from its marks that she was a Jewess; and I judged that the vase also belonged to one of the same people. Her dress was soiled with eggs and with curdled milk; and I knew that she must have eaten of both these things. Moreover, knowing that the Jew quarter at this time is a filthy place, I remarked that it was unclean." " But," said the Sheik, " how did you become acquainted with me and my profession? " The youth said in reply, " Knowing the envy of Alai ed Dowlet, the circumstance of your having fled from him is a proof of the renown of your excellence, and that your sagacity and mental powers must be as bright as the sun in the heavens. I have heard too of the good qualities with which you are gifted, and I beheld on your noble front the characteristics of those traits, which beamed upon me like the midday sun; from all of which I felt assured that you were the celebrated physician Aboo Sinna. I likewise knew that the Sultan could not bear to be separated from you for a moment, and therefore was convinced that you must have left him by your own desire and against his will." The young man next bent the knee of politeness before the Sheik, and thanked God for allowing him to meet with such a man. The Sheik then said, " What have you to ask of me? Tell me your wishes, and, as far as my destiny permits, I will endeavor to promote them." The intelligent youth replied, " It is impossible that you should remain separated from the Sultan; and what I ask from you is, that when you again appear before him, you will relate the occurrence which you have witnessed, and obtain me a place in his service, even as one of his most humble attendants."

Some days after this, a man came to the Sheik on the part of the Sultan, who begged his pardon for the past, and invited him to return to his palace. The Sheik took the youth with him, and on reaching the Sultan, related what he had witnessed respecting him; wherefore the Sultan forthwith appointed him to be one of his own pages.

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True Stories of Modern Magic

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M. Robert-Houdin

A Conjurer's Confessions

Hereward Carrington

MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

David P. Abbott

AND OTHERS

Fraudulent Spiritualism Unveiled

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True Stories of Modern Magic

M. Robert-Houdin

A Conjurer's Confessions

I

SELF-TRAINING

Sleight-of-hand theories alone cannot explain the mysteries of "magic" as practiced by that eminent Frenchman who revolutionized the entire art, and who was finally called upon to help his government out of a difficulty—Robert-Houdin. The success of his most famous performances hung not only on an incredible dexterity, but also on high ingenuity and moral courage, as the following pages from his "Memoirs" will prove to the reader. The story begins when the young man of twenty was laboring patiently as apprentice to a watchmaker.

IN order to aid my progress and afford me relaxation, my master recommended me to study some treatises on mechanics in general, and on clockmaking in particular. As this suited my taste exactly, I gladly assented, and I was devoting myself passionately to this attractive study, when a circumstance, apparently most simple, suddenly decided my future life by revealing to me a vocation whose mysterious resources must open a vast field for my inventive and fanciful ideas.

One evening I went into a bookseller's shop to buy Berthoud's "Treatise on Clockmaking," which I knew he had. The tradesman being engaged at the moment on matters more important, took down two volumes from the shelves and handed them to me without ceremony. On returning home I sat down to peruse my treatise conscientiously, but judge of my surprise when I read on the back of one of the volumes "SCIENTIFIC AMUSEMENTS." Astonished at finding such a title on a professional work, I opened it im-

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patiently, and, on running through the table of contents, my surprise was doubled on reading these strange phrases:

The way of performing tricks with the cards—How to guess a person's thoughts—To cut off a pigeon's head, to restore it to life, etc., etc.

The bookseller had made a mistake. In his haste, he had given me two volumes of the Encyclopædia instead of Berthoud. Fascinated, however, by the announcement of such marvels, I devoured the mysterious pages, and the further my reading advanced, the more I saw laid bare before me the secrets of an art for which I was unconsciously predestined.

I fear I shall be accused of exaggeration, or at least not be understood by many of my readers, when I say that this discovery caused me the greatest joy I had ever experienced. At this moment a secret presentiment warned me that success, perhaps glory, would one day accrue to me in the apparent realization of the marvelous and impossible, and fortunately these presentiments did not err.

The resemblance between two books, and the hurry of a bookseller, were the commonplace causes of the most important event in my life.

It may be urged that different circumstances might have suggested this profession to me at a later date. It is probable; but then I should have had no time for it. Would any workman, artisan, or tradesman give up a certainty, however slight it may be, to yield to a passion which would be surely regarded as a mania? Hence my irresistible penchant for the mysterious could only be followed at this precise period of my life.

How often since have I blessed this providential error, without which I should have probably vegetated as a country watchmaker! My life would have been spent in gentle monotony; I should have been spared many sufferings, emotions, and shocks; but, on the other hand, what lively sensations, what profound delight would have been sacrificed!

I was eagerly devouring every line of the magic book

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which described the astounding tricks; my head was aglow, and I at times gave way to thoughts which plunged me in ecstasy.

The author gave a very plain explanation of his tricks; still, he committed the error of supposing his readers possessed of the necessary skill to perform them. Now, I was entirely deficient in this skill, and though most desirous of acquiring it, I found nothing in the book to indicate the means. I was in the position of a man who attempts to copy a picture without possessing the slightest notion of drawing and painting.

In the absence of a professor to instruct me, I was compelled to create the principles of the science I wished to study. In the first place, I recognized the fundamental principle of sleight-of-hand, that the organs performing the principal part are the sight and touch. I saw that, in order to attain any degree of perfection, the professor must develop these organs to their fullest extent—for, in his exhibitions, he must be able to see everything that takes place around him at half a glance, and execute his deceptions with unfailing dexterity.

I had been often struck by the ease with which pianists can read and perform at sight the most difficult pieces. I saw that, by practice, it would be possible to create a certainty of perception and facility of touch, rendering it easy for the artist to attend to several things simultaneously, while his hands were busy employed with some complicated task. This faculty I wished to acquire and apply to sleight-of-hand; still, as music could not afford me the necessary elements, I had recourse to the juggler's art, in which I hoped to meet with an analogous result.

It is well known that the trick with the balls wonderfully improves the touch, but does it not improve the vision at the same time? In fact, when a juggler throws into the air four balls crossing each other in various directions, he requires an extraordinary power of sight to follow the direction his hands have given to each of the balls. At this period a corn-cutter resided at Blois, who possessed

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the double talent of juggling and extracting corns with a skill worthy of the lightness of his hands. Still, with both these qualities, he was not rich, and being aware of that fact, I hoped to obtain lessons from him at a price suited to my modest finances. In fact, for ten francs he agreed to initiate me in the juggling art.

I practiced with so much zeal, and progressed so rapidly, that in less than a month I had nothing more to learn; at least, I knew as much as my master, with the exception of corn-cutting, the monopoly in which I left him. I was able to juggle with four balls at once. But this did not satisfy my ambition; so I placed a book before me, and, while the balls were in the air, I accustomed myself to read without any hesitation.

This will probably seem to my readers very extraordinary; but I shall surprise them still more, when I say that I have just amused myself by repeating this curious experiment. Though thirty years have elapsed since the time of which I am writing, and though I scarcely once touched the balls during that period, I can still manage to read with ease while keeping three balls up.

The practice of this trick gave my fingers a remarkable degree of delicacy and certainty, while my eye was at the same time acquiring a promptitude of perception that was quite marvelous. Presently I shall have to speak of the service this rendered me in my experiment of second sight. After having thus made my hands supple and docile, I went on straight to sleight-of-hand, and I more especially devoted myself to the manipulation of cards and palmistry.

This operation requires a great deal of practice; for, while the hand is held apparently open, balls, corks, lumps of sugar, coins, etc., must be held unseen, the fingers remaining perfectly free and limber.

Owing to the little time at my disposal, the difficulties connected with these new experiments would have been insurmountable had I not found a mode of practicing without neglecting my business. It was the fashion in those days to wear coats with large pockets on the hips, called *à la*

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propriétaire, so whenever my hands were not otherwise engaged they slipped naturally into my pockets, and set to work with cards, coins, or one of the objects I have mentioned. It will be easily understood how much time I gained by this. Thus, for instance, when out on errands my hands could be at work on both sides; at dinner, I often ate my soup with one hand while I was learning to *sauter la coupe* with the other—in short, the slightest moment of relaxation was devoted to my favorite pursuit.

II

"SECOND SIGHT"

A thousand more trials of patience and perseverance finally brought to the conjurer a Parisian theater and an appreciative clientele. But he never ceased to labor and improve the quality of his marvelous effects.

THE experiment, however, to which I owed my reputation was one inspired by that fantastic god to whom Pascal attributes all the discoveries of this sublunary world: it was chance that led me straight to the invention of *second sight.*

My two children were playing one day in the drawing-room at a game they had invented for their own amusement. The younger had bandaged his elder brother's eyes, and made him guess the objects he touched, and when the latter happened to guess right, they changed places. This simple game suggested to me the most complicated idea that ever crossed my mind.

Pursued by the notion, I ran and shut myself up in my workroom, and was fortunately in that happy state when the mind follows easily the combinations traced by fancy. I rested my hand in my hands, and, in my excitement, laid down the first principles of second sight.

My readers will remember the experiment suggested to me formerly by the pianist's dexterity, and the strange

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faculty I succeeded in attaining: I could read while juggling with four balls. Thinking seriously of this, I fancied that this "perception by appreciation" might be susceptible of equal development, if I applied its principles to the memory and the mind.

I resolved, therefore, on making some experiments with my son Emile, and, in order to make my young assistant understand the nature of the exercise we were going to learn, I took a domino, the cinq-quatre for instance, and laid it before him. Instead of letting him count the points of the two numbers, I requested the boy to tell me the total at once.

"Nine," he said.

Then I added another domino, the quarter-tray.

"That makes sixteen," he said, without any hesitation.

I stopped the first lesson here; the next day we succeeded in counting at a single glance four dominoes, the day after six, and thus we at length were enabled to give instantaneously the product of a dozen dominoes.

This result obtained, we applied ourselves to a far more difficult task, over which we spent a month. My son and I passed rapidly before a toy-shop, or any other displaying a variety of wares, and cast an attentive glance upon it. A few steps farther on we drew paper and pencil from our pockets, and tried which could describe the greater number of objects seen in passing. I must own that my son reached a perfection far greater than mine, for he could often write down forty objects, while I could scarce reach thirty. Often feeling vexed at this defeat, I would return to the shop and verify his statement, but he rarely made a mistake.

My male readers will certainly understand the possibility of this, but they will recognize the difficulty. As for my lady readers, I am convinced beforehand they will not be of the same opinion, for they daily perform far more astounding feats. Thus, for instance, I can safely assert that a lady seeing another pass at full speed in a carriage, will have had time to analyze her toilet from her bonnet

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to her shoes, and be able to describe not only the fashion and quality of the stuffs, but also say if the lace be real or only machine-made. I have known ladies do this.

This natural, or acquired, faculty among ladies, but which my son and I had only gained by constant practice, was of great service in my performances, for while I was executing my tricks, I could see everything that passed around me, and thus prepare to foil any difficulties presented me. This exercise had given me, so to speak, the power of following two ideas simultaneously, and nothing is more favorable in conjuring than to be able to think at the same time both of what you are saying and of what you are doing. I eventually acquired such a knack in this that I frequently invented new tricks while going through my performances. One day, even, I made a bet I would solve a problem in mechanics while taking my part in conversation. We were talking of the pleasure of a country life, and I calculated during this time the quantity of wheels and pinions, as well as the necessary cogs, to produce certain revolutions required, without once failing in my reply.

This slight explanation will be sufficient to show what is the essential basis of second sight, and I will add that a secret and unnoticeable correspondence [1] existed between my son and myself, by which I could announce to him the name, nature, and bulk of objects handed me by spectators.

As none understood my mode of action, they were tempted to believe in something extraordinary, and, indeed, my son Emile, then aged twelve, possessed all the essential qualities to produce this opinion, for his pale, intellectual, and ever thoughtful face represented the type of a boy gifted with some supernatural power.

Two months were incessantly employed in erecting the scaffolding of our tricks, and when we were quite confident of being able to contend against the difficulties of such an undertaking, we announced the first representation of second sight. On the 12th of February, 1846, I printed in the center of my bill the following singular announcement:

[1] "Telegraphy."

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"In this performance M. Robert-Houdin's son, who is gifted with a marvelous second sight, after his eyes have been covered with a thick bandage, will designate every object presented to him by the audience."

I cannot say whether this announcement attracted any spectators, for my room was constantly crowded, still I may affirm, what may seem very extraordinary, that the experiment of second sight, which afterwards became so fashionable, produced no effect on the first performance. I am inclined to believe that the spectators fancied themselves the dupes of accomplices, but I was much annoyed by the result, as I had built on the surprise I should produce; still, having no reason to doubt its ultimate success, I was tempted to make a second trial, which turned out well.

The next evening I noticed in my room several persons who had been present on the previous night, and I felt they had come a second time to assure themselves of the reality of the experiment. It seems they were convinced, for my success was complete, and amply compensated for my former disappointment.

I especially remember a mark of singular approval with which one of my pit audience favored me. My son had named to him several objects he offered in succession; but not feeling satisfied, my incredulous friend, rising, as if to give more importance to the difficulty he was about to present, handed me an instrument peculiar to cloth merchants, and employed to count the number of threads. Acquiescing in his wish, I said to my boy, "What do I hold in my hand?"

"It is an instrument to judge the fineness of cloth, and called a thread counter."

"By Jove!" my spectator said, energetically, "it is marvelous. If I had paid ten francs to see it, I should not begrudge them."

From this moment my room was much too small, and was crowded every evening.

Still, success is not entirely rose-colored, and I could

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easily narrate many disagreeable scenes produced by the reputation I had of being a sorcerer; but I will only mention one, which forms a *résumé* of all I pass over:

A young lady of elegant manners paid me a visit one day, and although her face was hidden by a thick veil, my practiced eyes perfectly distinguished her features. She was very pretty.

My incognita would not consent to sit down till she was assured we were alone, and that I was the real Robert-Houdin. I also seated myself, and assuming the attitude of a man prepared to listen, I bent slightly to my visitor, as if awaiting her pleasure to explain to me the object of her mysterious visit. To my great surprise, the young lady, whose manner betrayed extreme emotion, maintained the most profound silence, and I began to find the visit very strange, and was on the point of forcing an explanation, at any hazard, when the fair unknown timidly ventured these words:

"Good Heavens! sir, I know not how you will interpret my visit."

Here she stopped, and let her eyes sink with a very embarrassed air; then, making a violent effort, she continued:

"What I have to ask of you, sir, is very difficult to explain."

"Speak, madam, I beg," I said, politely, "and I will try to guess what you cannot explain to me."

And I began asking myself what this reserve meant.

"In the first place," the young lady said, in a low voice, and looking round her, "I must tell you confidentially that I loved, my love was returned, and I—I am betrayed."

At the last word the lady raised her head, overcame the timidity she felt, and said, in a firm and assured voice:

"Yes, sir—yes, I am betrayed, and for that reason I have come to you."

"Really, madam," I said, much surprised at this strange confession, "I do not see how I can help you in such a matter."

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"Oh, sir, I entreat you," said my fair visitor, clasping her hands—"I implore you not to abandon me!"

I had great difficulty in keeping my countenance, and yet I felt an extreme curiosity to know the history concealed behind this mystery.

"Calm yourself, madam," I remarked, in a tone of tender sympathy; "tell me what you would of me, and if it be in my power——"

"If it be in your power!" the young lady said, quickly; "why, nothing is more easy, sir."

"Explain yourself, madam."

"Well, sir, I wish to be avenged."

"In what way?"

"How, you know better than I, sir; must I teach you? You have in your power means to——"

"I, madam?"

"Yes, sir, you! for you are a sorcerer, and cannot deny it."

At this word sorcerer, I was much inclined to laugh; but I was restrained by the incognita's evident emotion. Still, wishing to put an end to a scene which was growing ridiculous, I said, in a politely ironical tone:

"Unfortunately, madam, you give me a title I never possessed."

"How, sir!" the young woman exclaimed, in a quick tone, "you will not allow you are——"

"A sorcerer, madam? Oh, no, I will not."

"You will not?"

"No, a thousand times no, madam."

At these words my visitor rose hastily, muttered a few incoherent words, appeared suffering from terrible emotion, and then drawing near me with flaming eyes and passionate gestures, repeated:

"Ah, you will not! Very good; I now know what I have to do."

Stupefied by such an outbreak, I looked at her fixedly, and began to suspect the cause of her extraordinary conduct.

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"There are two modes of acting," she said, with terrible volubility, "toward people who devote themselves to magic arts—entreaty and menaces. You would not yield to the first of these means, hence, I must employ the second. Stay," she added, "perhaps this will induce you to speak."

And, lifting up her cloak, she laid her hand on the hilt of a dagger passed through her girdle. At the same time she suddenly threw back her veil, and displayed features in which all the signs of rage and madness could be traced. No longer having a doubt as to the person I had to deal with, my first movement was to rise and stand on my guard; but this first feeling overcome, I repented the thought of a struggle with the unhappy woman, and determined on employing a method almost always successful with those deprived of reason. I pretended to accede to her wishes.

"If it be so, madam I yield to your request. Tell me what you require."

"I have told you, sir; I wish for vengeance, and there is only one method to——"

Here there was a fresh interruption, and the young lady, calmed by my apparent submission, as well as embarrassed by the request she had to make of me, became again timid and confused.

"Well, madam?"

"Well, sir, I know not how to tell you—how to explain to you—but I fancy there are certain means—certain spells —which render it impossible—impossible for a man to be —unfaithful."

"I now understand what you wish, madam. It is a certain magic practice employed in the middle ages. Nothing is easier, and I will satisfy you."

Decided on playing the farce to the end, I took down the largest book I could find in my library, turned over the leaves, stopped at a page which I pretended to scan with profound attention, and then addressing the lady, who followed all my movements anxiously,

"Madam," I said confidentially, "the spell I am going

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to perform renders it necessary for me to know the name of the person; have the kindness, then, to tell it me."

"Julian!" she said, in a faint voice.

With all the gravity of a real sorcerer, I solemnly thrust a pin through a lighted candle, and pronounced some cabalistic words. After which, blowing out the candle, and turning to the poor creature, I said:

"Madam, it is done; your wish is accomplished."

"Oh, thank you, sir," she replied, with the expression of the profoundest gratitude; and at the same moment she laid a purse on the table and rushed away. I ordered my servant to follow her to her house, and obtain all the information he could about her, and I learned she had been a widow for a short time, and that the loss of an adored husband had disturbed her reason. The next day I visited her relatives, and, returning them the purse, I told them the scene the details of which the reader has just perused.

This scene, with some others that preceded and followed it, compelled me to take measures to guard myself against bores of every description. I could not dream, as formerly, of exiling myself in the country, but I employed a similar resource: this was to shut myself up in my workroom, and organize around me a system of defense against those whom I called, in my ill-temper, thieves of time.

I daily received visits from persons who were utter strangers to me; some were worth knowing, but the majority, gaining an introduction under the most futile pretexts, only came to kill a portion of their leisure time with me. It was necessary to distinguish the tares from the wheat, and this is the arrangement I made:

When one of these gentlemen rang at my door, an electric communication struck a bell in my workroom; I was thus warned and put on my guard. My servant opened the door, and, as is customary, inquired the visitor's name, while I, for my part, laid my ear to a tube, arranged for the purpose, which conveyed to me every word. If, according to his reply, I thought it as well not to receive him, I pressed a button, and a white mark that appeared in a

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certain part of the hall announced I was not at home to him. My servant then stated I was out, and begged the visitor to apply to the manager.

Sometimes it happened that I erred in my judgment, and regretted having granted an audience; but I had another mode of shortening a bore's visit. I had placed behind the sofa on which I sat an electric spring, communicating with a bell my servant could hear. In case of need, and while talking, I threw my arm carelessly over the back of the sofa, touching the spring, and the bell rang. Then my servant, playing a little farce, opened the front door, rang the bell, which could be heard from the room where I sat, and came to tell me that M. X—— (a name invented for the occasion) wished to speak to me. I ordered M. X—— to be shown into an adjoining room, and it was very rare that my bore did not raise the siege. No one can form an idea how much time I gained by this happy arrangement, or how many times I blessed my imagination and the celebrated savant to whom the discovery of galvanism is due!

This feeling can be easily explained, for my time was of inestimable value. I husbanded it like a treasure, and never sacrificed it, unless the sacrifice might help me to discover new experiments destined to stimulate public curiosity.

To support my determination in making my researches, I had ever before me this maxim:

IT IS MORE DIFFICULT TO SUPPORT ADMIRATION THAN TO EXCITE IT.

And this other, an apparent corollary of the preceding:

THE FASHION AN ARTIST ENJOYS CAN ONLY LAST AS HIS TALENT DAILY INCREASES.

Nothing increases a professional man's merit so much as the possession of an independent fortune; this truth may be coarse, but it is indubitable. Not only was I convinced of these principles of high economy, but I also knew that a man must strive to profit by the fickle favor of the public, which equally descends if it does not rise. Hence I worked my reputation as much as I could. In spite of my numer-

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ous engagements, I found means to give performances in all the principal theaters, though great difficulties frequently arose, as my performance did not end till half-past ten, and I could only fulfill my other engagements after that hour.

Eleven o'clock was generally the hour fixed for my appearance on a strange stage, and my readers may judge of the speed required to proceed to the theater in so short a time and make my preparations. It is true that the moments were as well counted as employed, and my curtain had hardly fallen than, rushing toward the stairs, I got before my audience, and jumped into a vehicle that bore me off at full speed.

But this fatigue was as nothing compared to the emotion occasionally produced by an error in the time that was to elapse between my two performances. I remember that, one night, having to wind up the performances at the Vaudeville, the stage manager miscalculated the time the pieces would take in performing, and found himself much in advance. He sent off an express to warn me that the curtain had fallen, and I was anxiously expected. Can my readers comprehend my wretchedness? My experiments, of which I could omit none, would occupy another quarter of an hour; but instead of indulging in useless recriminations, I resigned myself and continued my performance, though I was a prey to frightful anxiety. While speaking, I fancied I could hear that cadenced yell of the public to which the famous song, "*Des lampions, des lampions,*" was set. Thus, either through preoccupation or a desire to end sooner, I found when my performance was over I had gained five minutes out of the quarter of an hour. Assuredly, it might be called the quarter of an hour's grace.

To jump into a carriage and drive to the Place de la Bourse was the affair of an instant; still, twenty minutes had elapsed since the curtain fell, and that was an enormous time. My son Emile and I proceeded up the actors' stairs at full speed, but on the first step we had heard the cries, whistling, and stamping of the impatient audience. What a prospect! I knew that frequently, either right or wrong,

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the public treated an artiste, no matter whom, very harshly, to remind him of punctuality. That sovereign always appears to have on its lips the words of another monarch: "I was obliged to wait." However, we hurried up the steps leading to the stage.

The stage manager, who had been watching, on hearing our hurried steps, cried from the landing:

"Is that you, M. Houdin?"

"Yes, sir—yes."

"Raise the curtain!" the same voice shouted.

"Wait, wait, it is imp——"

My breath would not allow me to finish my objection; I fell on a chair, unable to move.

"Come, M. Houdin," the manager said, "*do* go on the stage, the curtain is up, and the public are so impatient."

The door at the back of the stage was open, but I could not pass through it; fatigue and emotion nailed me to the spot. Still, an idea occurred to me, which saved me from the popular wrath.

"Go on to the stage, my boy," I said to my son, "and prepare all that is wanting for the second-sight trick."

The public allowed themselves to be disarmed by this youth, whose face inspired a sympathizing interest; and my son, after gravely bowing to the audience, quietly made his slight preparations, that is to say, he carried an ottoman to the front of the stage, and placed on a neighboring table a slate, some chalk, a pack of cards, and a bandage.

This slight delay enabled me to recover my breath and calm my nerves, and I advanced in my turn with an attempt to assume the stereotyped smile, in which I signally failed, as I was so agitated. The audience at first remained silent, then their faces gradually unwrinkled, and soon, one or two claps having been ventured, they were carried away and peace was made. I was well rewarded, however, for this terrible ordeal, as my "second-sight" never gained a more brilliant triumph.

An incident greatly enlivened the termination of my performance.

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A spectator, who had evidently come on purpose to embarrass us, had tried in vain for some minutes to baffle my son's clairvoyance, when, turning to me, he said, laying marked stress on his words:

"As your son is a soothsayer, of course he can guess the number of my stall?"

The importunate spectator doubtless hoped to force us into a confession of our impotence, for he covered his number, and the adjacent seats being occupied, it was apparently impossible to read the numbers. But I was on my guard against all surprises, and my reply was ready. Still, in order to profit as much as possible by the situation, I feigned to draw back.

"You know, sir," I said, feigning an embarrassed air, "that my son is neither sorcerer nor diviner; he reads through my eyes, and hence I have given this experiment the name of second sight. As I cannot see the number of your stall, and the seats close to you are occupied, my son cannot tell it you."

"Ah! I was certain of it," my persecutor said, in triumph, and turning to his neighbors: "I told you I would pin him."

"Oh, sir! you are not generous in your victory," I said, in my turn, in a tone of mockery. "Take care; if you pique my son's vanity too sharply, he may solve your problem, though it is so difficult."

"I defy him," said the spectator, leaning firmly against the back of his seat, to hide the number better—"yes, yes —I defy him!"

"You believe it to be difficult, then?"

"I will grant more: it is impossible."

"Well, then, sir, that is a stronger reason for us to try it. You will not be angry if we triumph in our turn?" I added, with a petulant smile.

"Come, sir; we understand evasions of that sort. I repeat it—I challenge you both."

The public found great amusement in this debate, and patiently awaited its issue.

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"Emile," I said to my son, "prove to this gentleman that nothing can escape your second sight."

"It is number sixty-nine," the boy answered, immediately.

Noisy and hearty applause rose from every part of the theater, in which our opponent joined, for, confessing his defeat, he exclaimed, as he clapped his hands, "It is astounding—magnificent!"

The way I succeeded in finding out the number of the stall was this: I knew beforehand that in all theaters where the stalls are divided down the center by a passage, the uneven numbers are on the right, and the even on the left. As at the Vaudeville each row was composed of ten stalls, it followed that on the right hand the several rows must begin with one, twenty-one, forty-one, and so on, increasing by twenty each. Guided by this, I had no difficulty in discovering that my opponent was seated in number sixty-nine, representing the fifth stall in the fourth row. I had prolonged the conversation for the double purpose of giving more brilliancy to my experiment, and gaining time to make my researches. Thus I applied my process of two simultaneous thoughts, to which I have already alluded.

As I am now explaining matters, I may as well tell my readers some of the artifices that added material brilliancy to the second sight. I have already said this experiment was the result of a material communication between myself and my son which no one could detect. Its combinations enabled us to describe any conceivable object; but, though this was a splendid result, I saw that I should soon encounter unheard-of difficulties in executing it.

The experiment of second sight always formed the termination of my performance. Each evening I saw unbelievers arrive with all sorts of articles to triumph over a secret which they could not unravel. Before going to see Robert-Houdin's son a council was held, in which an object that must embarrass the father was chosen. Among these were half-effaced antique medals, minerals, books printed

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in characters of every description (living and dead languages), coats-of-arms, microscopic objects, etc.

But what caused me the greatest difficulty was in finding out the contents of parcels, often tied with a string, or even sealed up. But I had managed to contend successfully against all these attempts to embarrass me. I opened boxes, purses, pocketbooks, etc., with great ease, and unnoticed, while appearing to be engaged on something quite different. Were a sealed parcel offered me, I cut a small slit in the paper with the nail of my left thumb, which I always purposely kept very long and sharp, and thus discovered what it contained. One essential condition was excellent sight, and that I possessed to perfection. I owed it originally to my old trade, and practice daily improved it. An equally indispensable necessity was to know the name of every object offered me. It was not enough to say, for instance, "It is a coin"; but my son must give its technical name, its value, the country in which it was current, and the year in which it was struck. Thus, for instance, if an English crown were handed me, my son was expected to state that it was struck in the reign of George IV, and had an intrinsic value of six francs eighteen centimes.

Aided by an excellent memory, we had managed to classify in our heads the name and value of all foreign money. We could also describe a coat-of-arms in heraldic terms. Thus, on the arms of the house of X—— being handed me, my son would reply: "Field gules, with two croziers argent in pale." This knowledge was very useful to us in the *salons* of the Faubourg Saint Germain, where we were frequently summoned.

I had also learned the characters—though unable to translate a word—of an infinity of languages, such as Chinese, Russian, Turkish, Greek, Hebrew, etc. We knew, too, the names of all surgical instruments, so that a surgical pocketbook, however complicated it might be, could not embarrass us. Lastly, I had a very sufficient knowledge of mineralogy, precious stones, antiquities, and curiosities; but I had at my command every possible resource for ac-

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quiring these studies, as one of my dearest and best friends, Aristide le Carpentier, a learned antiquary, and uncle of the talented composer of the same name, had, and still has, a cabinet of antique curiosities, which makes the keepers of the imperial museums fierce with envy. My son and I spent many long days in learning here names and dates, of which we afterwards made a learned display. Le Carpentier taught me many things, and, among others, he described various signs by which to recognize old coins when the die is worn off. Thus, a Trajan, a Tiberius, or a Marcus Aurelius became as familiar to me as a five-franc piece.

Owing to my old trade, I could open a watch with ease, and do it with one hand, so as to be able to read the maker's name without the public suspecting it: then I shut up the watch again and the trick was ready; my son managed the rest of the business.

But that power of memory which my son possessed in an eminent degree certainly did us the greatest service. When we went to private houses, he needed only a very rapid inspection in order to know all the objects in a room, as well as the various ornaments worn by the spectators, such as châtelaines, pins, eyeglasses, fans, brooches, rings, bouquets, etc. He thus could describe these objects with the greatest ease, when I pointed them out to him by our secret communication. Here is an instance:

One evening, at a house in the Chaussée d'Antin, and at the end of a performance which had been as successful as it was loudly applauded, I remembered that, while passing through the next room to the one we were now in, I had begged my son to cast a glance at a library and remember the titles of some of the books, as well as the order they were arranged in. No one had noticed this rapid examination.

"To end the second-sight experiment, sir," I said to the master of the house, "I will prove to you that my son can read through a wall. Will you lend me a book?"

I was naturally conducted to the library in question, which I pretended now to see for the first time, and I laid my finger on a book.

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"Emile," I said to my son, "what is the name of this work?"

"It is Buffon," he replied quickly.

"And the one by its side?" an incredulous spectator hastened to ask.

"On the right or left?" my son asked.

"On the right," the speaker said, having a good reason for choosing this book, for the lettering was very small.

"The Travels of Anacharsis the Younger," the boy replied. "But," he added, "had you asked the name of the book on the left, sir, I should have said Lamartine's Poetry. A little to the right of this row, I see Crébillon's works; below, two volumes of Fleury's Memoirs"; and my son thus named a dozen books before he stopped.

The spectators had not said a word during this description, as they felt so amazed; but when the experiment had ended, all complimented us by clapping their hands.

III

THE MAGICIAN WHO BECAME AN AMBASSADOR

It is not generally known that Robert-Houdin once rendered his country an important service as special envoy to Algeria. Half a century ago this colony was an endless source of trouble to France. Although the rebel Arab chieftain Abd-del-Kader had surrendered in 1847, an irregular warfare was kept up against the French authority by the native Kabyles, stimulated by their Mohammedan priests, and particularly through so-called "miracles," such as recovery from wounds and burns self-inflicted by the Marabouts and other fanatic devotees of the Prophet.

Thus in 1856 the hopes of the French Foreign Office rested on Robert-Houdin. He was requested to exhibit his tricks in the most impressive form possible, with the idea of proving to the deluded Arabs that they had been in error in ascribing supernatural powers to their holy men.

IT was settled that I should reach Algiers by the next 27th of September, the day on which the great fêtes an-

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nually offered by the capital of Algeria to the Arabs would commence.

I must say that I was much influenced in my determination by the knowledge that my mission to Algeria had a quasi-political character. I, a simple conjurer, was proud of being able to render my country a service.

It is known that the majority of revolts which have to be suppressed in Algeria are excited by intriguers, who say they are inspired by the Prophet, and are regarded by the Arabs as envoys of God on earth to deliver them from the oppression of the *Roumi* (Christians).

These false prophets and holy Marabouts, who are no more sorcerers than I am, and indeed even less so, still contrive to influence the fanaticism of their coreligionists by tricks as primitive as are the spectators before whom they are performed.

The government was, therefore, anxious to destroy their pernicious influence, and reckoned on me to do so. They hoped, with reason, by the aid of my experiments, to prove to the Arabs that the tricks of their Marabouts were mere child's play, and owing to their simplicity could not be done by an envoy from Heaven, which also led us very naturally to show them that we are their superiors in everything, and, as for sorcerers, there are none like the French.

Presently I will show the success obtained by these skillful tactics.

Three months were to elapse between the day of my acceptance and that of my departure, which I employed in arranging a complete arsenal of my best tricks, and left St. Gervais on the 10th of September.

I will give no account of my passage, further than to say no sooner was I at sea than I wished I had arrived, and, after thirty-six hours' navigation, I greeted the capital of our colony with indescribable delight.

On the 28th of October, the day appointed for my first performance before the Arabs, I reached my post at an early hour, and could enjoy the sight of their entrance into the theater.

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Each *goum*,[1] drawn up in companies, was introduced separately, and led in perfect order to the places chosen for it in advance. Then came the turn of the chiefs, who seated themselves with all the gravity becoming their character.

Their introduction lasted some time, for these sons of nature could not understand that they were boxed up thus, side by side, to enjoy a spectacle, and our comfortable seats, far from seeming so to them, bothered them strangely. I saw them fidgeting about for some time, and trying to tuck their legs under them, after the fashion of European tailors.

The caïds, agas, bash-agas, and other titled Arabs, held the places of honor, for they occupied the orchestra stalls and the dress circle.

In the midst of them were several privileged officers, and, lastly, the interpreters were mingled among the spectators, to translate my remarks to them.

I was also told that several curious people, having been unable to procure tickets, had assumed the Arab burnous, and, binding the camel's-hair cord round their foreheads, had slipped in among their new coreligionists.

This strange medley of spectators was indeed a most curious sight. The dress circle, more especially, presented an appearance as grand as it was imposing. Some sixty Arab chiefs, clothed in their red mantles (the symbol of their submission to France), on which one or more decorations glistened, gravely awaited my performance with majestic dignity.

I have performed before many brilliant assemblies, but never before one which struck me so much as this. However, the impression I felt on the rise of the curtain, far from paralyzing me, on the contrary inspired me with a lively sympathy for the spectators, whose faces seemed so well prepared to accept the marvels promised them. As soon as I walked on the stage, I felt quite at my ease, and

[1] Brigade of native soldiers under French command. It was this influential native faction that the Foreign Office wished particularly to impress, through Robert-Houdin's skill.—EDITOR.

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enjoyed, in anticipation, the sight I was going to amuse myself with.

I felt, I confess, rather inclined to laugh at myself and my audience, for I stepped forth, wand in hand, with all the gravity of a real sorcerer. Still, I did not give way, for I was here not merely to amuse a curious and kind public, I must produce a startling effect upon coarse minds and prejudices, for I was enacting the part of a French Marabout.

Compared with the simple tricks of their pretended sorcerers, my experiments must appear perfect miracles to the Arabs.

I commenced my performance in the most profound, I might almost say religious, silence, and the attention of the spectators was so great that they seemed petrified. Their fingers alone moving nervously, played with the beads of their rosaries, while they were, doubtless, invoking the protection of the Most High.

This apathetic condition did not suit me, for I had not come to Algeria to visit a waxwork exhibition. I wanted movement, animation, life in fact, around me.

I changed my batteries, and, instead of generalizing my remarks, I addressed them more especially to some of the Arabs, whom I stimulated by my words, and still more by my actions. The astonishment then gave way to a more expressive feeling, which was soon evinced by noisy outbursts.

This was especially the case when I produced cannon balls from a hat, for my spectators, laying aside their gravity, expressed their delighted admiration by the strangest and most energetic gestures.

Then came—greeted by the same success—the bouquet of flowers, produced instantaneously from a hat; the *cornucopia*, supplying a multitude of objects which I distributed, though unable to satisfy the repeated demands made on all sides, and still more by those who had their hands full already; the *five-franc pieces*, sent across the theater into a crystal box suspended above the spectators.

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One trick I should much have liked to perform was the *inexhaustible bottle*, so appreciated by the Parisians and the Manchester "hands"; but I could not employ it in this performance, for it is well known the followers of Mohammed drink no fermented liquor—at least not publicly. Hence, I substituted the following with considerable advantage:

I took a silver cup, like those called "punch bowls" in the Parisian cafés. I unscrewed the foot, and passing my wand through it showed that the vessel contained nothing; then, having refitted the two parts, I went to the center of the pit, when, at my command, the bowl was *magically* filled with sweetmeats, which were found excellent.

The sweetmeats exhausted, I turned the bowl over, and proposed to fill it with excellent coffee; so, gravely passing my hand thrice over the bowl, a dense vapor immediately issued from it, and announced the presence of the precious liquid. The bowl was full of boiling coffee, which I poured into cups, and offered to my astounded spectators.

The first cups were only accepted, so to speak, under protest; for not an Arab would consent to moisten his lips with a beverage which he thought came straight from Shaitan's kitchen; but, insensibly seduced by the perfume of their favorite liquor, and urged by the interpreters, some of the boldest decided on tasting the magic liquor, and all soon followed their example.

The vessel, rapidly emptied, was repeatedly filled again with equal rapidity; and it satisfied all demands, like my inexhaustible bottle, and was borne back to the stage still full.

But it was not enough to amuse my spectators; I must also, in order to fulfill the object of my mission, startle and even terrify them by the display of a supernatural power.

My arrangements had all been made for this purpose, and I had reserved for the end of my performances three tricks, which must complete my reputation as a sorcerer.

Many of my readers will remember having seen at my

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performances a small but solidly built box, which, being handed to the spectators, becomes heavy or light at my order; a child might raise it with ease, and yet the most powerful man could not move it from its place.

I advanced, with my box in my hand, to the center of the "practicable," communicating from the stage to the pit; then, addressing the Arabs, I said to them:

"From what you have witnessed, you will attribute a supernatural power to me, and you are right. I will give you a new proof of my marvelous authority, by showing that I can deprive the most powerful man of his strength and restore it at my will. Anyone who thinks himself strong enough to try the experiment may draw near me." (I spoke slowly, in order to give the interpreter time to translate my words.)

An Arab of middle height, but well built and muscular, like many of the Arabs are, came to my side with sufficient assurance.

"Are you very strong?" I said to him, measuring him from head to foot.

"Oh, yes!" he replied carelessly.

"Are you sure you will always remain so?"

"Quite sure."

"You are mistaken, for in an instant I will rob you of your strength, and you shall become as a little child."

The Arab smiled disdainfully as a sign of his incredulity.

"Stay," I continued; "lift up this box."

The Arab stooped, lifted up the box, and said to me, coldly, "Is that all?"

"Wait—!" I replied.

Then, with all possible gravity, I made an imposing gesture, and solemnly pronounced the words:

"Behold! you are weaker than a woman; now, try to lift the box."

The Hercules, quite cool as to my conjuration, seized the box once again by the handle, and gave it a violent tug, but this time the box resisted, and, spite of his most vigorous attacks, would not budge an inch.

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The Arab vainly expended on this unlucky box a strength which would have raised an enormous weight, until, at length, exhausted, panting, and red with anger, he stopped, became thoughtful, and began to comprehend the influences of magic.

He was on the point of withdrawing; but that would be allowing his weakness, and that he, hitherto respected for his vigor, had become as a little child. This thought rendered him almost mad.

Deriving fresh strength from the encouragements his friends offered him by word and deed, he turned a glance round them, which seemed to say: "You will see what a son of the desert can do."

He bent once again over the box: his nervous hands twined round the handle, and his legs, placed on either side like two bronze columns, served as a support for the final effort.

But, wonder of wonders! this Hercules, a moment since so strong and proud, now bows his head; his arms, riveted to the box, undergo a violent muscular contraction; his legs give way, and he falls on his knees with a yell of agony!

An electric shock, produced by an inductive apparatus, had been passed, on a signal from me, from the further end of the stage into the handle of the box. Hence the contortions of the poor Arab!

It would have been cruelty to prolong this scene.

I gave a second signal, and the electric current was immediately intercepted. My athlete, disengaged from his terrible bondage, raised his hands over his head.

"Allah! Allah!" he exclaimed, full of terror; then wrapping himself up quickly in the folds of his burnous, as if to hide his disgrace, he rushed through the ranks of the spectators and gained the front entrance.

With the exception of my stage boxes and the privileged spectators who appeared to take great pleasure in this experiment, my audience had become grave and silent, and I heard the words "Shaitan!" "Djenoum!" passing in

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a murmur round the circle of credulous men, who, while gazing on me, seemed astonished that I possessed none of the physical qualities attributed to the angel of darkness.

I allowed my public a few moments to recover from the emotion produced by my experiment and the flight of the herculean Arab.

One of the means employed by the Marabouts to gain influence in the eyes of the Arabs is by causing a belief in their invulnerability.

One of them, for instance, ordered a gun to be loaded and fired at him from a short distance, but in vain did the flint produce a shower of sparks; the Marabout pronounced some cabalistic words, and the gun did not explode.

The mystery was simple enough; the gun did not go off because the Marabout had skillfully stopped up the vent.

Colonel de Neveu explained to me the importance of discrediting such a miracle by opposing to it a sleight-of-hand trick far superior to it, and I had the very article.

I informed the Arabs that I possessed a talisman rendering me invulnerable, and I defied the best marksman in Algeria to hit me.

I had hardly uttered the words when an Arab, who had attracted my notice by the attention he had paid to my tricks, jumped over four rows of seats, and disdaining the use of the "practicable," crossed the orchestra, upsetting flutes, clarionets, and violins, escaladed the stage, while burning himself at the footlights, and then said, in excellent French:

"I will kill you!"

An immense burst of laughter greeted both the Arab's picturesque ascent and his murderous intentions, while an interpreter who stood near me told me I had to deal with a Marabout.

"You wish to kill me!" I replied, imitating his accent and the inflection of his voice. "Well, I reply, that though you are a sorcerer, I am still a greater one, and you will not kill me."

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I held a cavalry pistol in my hand, which I presented to him.

"Here, take this weapon, and assure yourself it has undergone no preparation."

The Arab breathed several times down the barrel, then through the nipple, to assure himself there was a communication between them, and after carefully examining the pistol, said:

"The weapon is good, and I will kill you."

"As you are determined, and for more certainty, put in a double charge of powder, and a wad on the top."

"It is done."

"Now, here is a leaden ball; mark it with your knife, so as to be able to recognize it, and put it in the pistol, with a second wad."

"It is done."

"Now that you are quite sure your pistol is loaded, and that it will explode, tell me, do you feel no remorse, no scruple about killing me thus, although I authorize you to do so?"

"No, for I wish to kill you," the Arab repeated coldly.

Without replying, I put an apple on the point of a knife, and, standing a few yards from the Marabout, ordered him to fire.

"Aim straight at the heart," I said to him.

My opponent aimed immediately, without the slightest hesitation.

The pistol exploded, and the bullet lodged in the center of the apple.

I carried the talisman to the Marabout, who recognized the ball he had marked.

I could not say that this trick produced greater stupefaction than the ones preceding it: at any rate, my spectators, palsied by surprise and terror, looked round in silence, seeming to think, "Where the deuce have we got to here!"

A pleasant scene, however, soon unwrinkled many of their faces. The Marabout, though stupefied by his defeat, had

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not lost his wits; so, profiting by the moment when he returned me the pistol, he seized the apple, thrust it into his waist belt, and could not be induced to return it, persuaded as he was that he possessed in it an incomparable talisman.

For the last trick in my performance I required the assistance of an Arab.

At the request of several interpreters, a young Moor, about twenty years of age, tall, well built, and richly dressed, consented to come on the stage. Bolder and more civilized, doubtless, than his comrades of the plains, he walked firmly up to me.

I drew him toward the table that was in the center of the stage, and pointed out to him and to the other spectators that it was slightly built and perfectly isolated. After which, without further preface, I told him to mount upon it, and covered him with an enormous cloth cone, open at the top.

Then, drawing the cone and its contents on to a plank, the ends of which were held by my servant and myself, we walked to the footlights with our heavy burden, and upset it. The Moor had disappeared—the cone was perfectly empty!

Immediately there began a spectacle which I shall never forget.

The Arabs were so affected by this last trick, that, impelled by an irresistible feeling of terror, they rose in all parts of the house, and yielded to the influence of a general panic. To tell the truth, the crowd of fugitives was densest at the door of the dress circle, and it could be seen, from the agility and confusion of these high dignitaries, that they were the first to wish to leave the house.

Vainly did one of them, the Caïd of the Beni-Salah, more courageous than his colleagues, try to restrain them by his words:

"Stay! stay! we cannot thus lose one of our coreligionists. Surely we must know what has become of him, or what has been done to him. Stay! stay!"

But the coreligionists only ran away the faster, and soon

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the courageous caïd, led away by their example, followed them.

They little knew what awaited them at the door of the theater; but they had scarce gone down the steps when they found themselves face to face with the "resuscitated Moor."

The first movement of terror overcome, they surrounded the man, felt and cross-questioned him; but, annoyed by these repeated questions, he had no better recourse than to escape at full speed.

The next evening the second performance took place, and produced nearly the same effect as the previous one.

The blow was struck: henceforth the interpreters and all those who had dealings with the Arabs received orders to make them understand that my pretended miracles were only the result of skill, inspired and guided by an art called *prestidigitation*, in no way connected with sorcery.

The Arabs doubtless yielded to these arguments, for henceforth I was on the most friendly terms with them. Each time a chief saw me, he never failed to come up and press my hand. And, even more, these men whom I had so terrified, when they became my friends, gave me a precious testimony of their esteem—I may say, too, of their admiration, for that is their own expression.

IV

FACING THE ARAB'S PISTOL

The severest trial of all was unexpectedly encountered during a visit paid by the conjurer and his wife to Bou-Allem-ben-Sherifa, Bash-Aga of the Djendel, a tribe of the desert interior.

We entered a small room very elegantly decorated, in which were two divans.

"This," our host said, "is the room reserved for guests of distinction; you can go to bed when you like, but if you

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are not tired, I would ask your leave to present to you several chief men of my tribe, who, having heard of you, wish to see you."

"Let them come in," I said, after consulting Madame Houdin, "we will receive them with pleasure."

The interpreter went out, and soon brought in a dozen old men, among whom were a Marabout and several talebs, whom the bash-aga appeared to hold in great deference.

They sat down in a circle on carpets and kept up a very lively conversation about my performances at Algiers. This learned society discussed the probability of the marvels related by the chief of the tribe, who took great pleasure in depicting his impressions and those of his coreligionists at the sight of the *miracles* I had performed.

Each lent an attentive ear to these stories, and regarded me with a species of veneration; the Marabout alone displayed a degree of skepticism, and asserted that the spectators had been duped by what he called a vision.

Jealous of my reputation as a French sorcerer, I thought I must perform before the unbeliever a few tricks as a specimen of my late performance. I had the pleasure of astounding my audience, but the Marabout continued to offer me a systematic opposition, by which his neighbors were visibly annoyed; the poor fellow did not suspect, though, what I had in store for him.

My antagonist wore in his sash a watch, the chain of which hung outside.

I believe I have already mentioned a certain talent I possess of filching a watch, a pin, a pocketbook, etc., with a skill by which several of my friends have been victimized.

I was fortunately born with an honest and upright heart, or this peculiar talent might have led me too far. When I felt inclined for a joke of this nature, I turned it to profit in a conjuring trick, or waited till my friend took leave of me, and then recalled him: "Stay," I would say, handing him the stolen article, "let this serve as a lesson to put you on your guard against persons less honest than myself."

But to return to our Marabout. I had stolen his watch

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as I passed near him and slipped into its place a five-franc piece.

To prevent his detecting it, and while waiting till I could profit by my larceny, I improvised a trick. After juggling away Bou-Allem's rosary, I made it pass into one of the numerous slippers left at the door by the guests; this shoe was next found to be full of coins, and to end this little scene comically, I made five-franc pieces come out of the noses of the spectators. They took such pleasure in this trick that I fancied I should never terminate it. "*Douros! douros!*" [1] they shouted, as they twitched their noses. I willingly acceded to their request, and the *douros* issued at command.

The delight was so great that several Arabs rolled on the ground; this coarsely expressed joy on the part of Mohammedans was worth frenzied applause to me.

I pretended to keep aloof from the Marabout, who, as I expected, remained serious and impassive.

When calm was restored, my rival began speaking hurriedly to his neighbors, as if striving to dispel their illusion, and, not succeeding, he addressed me through the interpreter:

"You will not deceive me in that way," he said, with a crafty look.

"Why so?"

"Because I don't believe in your power."

"Ah, indeed! Well, then, if you do not believe in my power, I will compel you to believe in my skill."

"Neither in one nor the other."

I was at this moment the whole length of the room from the Marabout.

"Stay," I said to him; "you see this five-franc piece."

"Yes."

"Close your hand firmly, for the piece will go into it in spite of yourself."

"I am ready," the Arab said, in an incredulous voice, as he held out his tightly closed fist.

[1] Gold Arabic coin.

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I took the piece at the end of my fingers, so that the assembly might all see it, then, feigning to throw it at the Marabout, it disappeared at the word "Pass!"

My man opened his hand, and, finding nothing in it, shrugged his shoulders, as if to say, "You see, I told you so."

I was well aware the piece was not there, but it was important to draw the Marabout's attention momentarily from the sash, and for this purpose I employed the feint.

"That does not surprise me," I replied, "for I threw the piece with such strength that it went right through your hand, and has fallen into your sash. Being afraid I might break your watch by the blow, I called it to me: here it is!" And I showed him the watch in my hand.

The Marabout quickly put his hand in his waist belt, to assure himself of the truth, and was quite stupefied at finding the five-franc piece.

The spectators were astounded. Some among them began telling their beads with a vivacity evidencing a certain agitation of mind; but the Marabout frowned without saying a word, and I saw he was spelling over some evil design.

"I now believe in your supernatural power," he said; "you are a real sorcerer; hence, I hope you will not fear to repeat here a trick you performed in your theater"; and offering me two pistols he held concealed beneath his burnous, he added, "Come, choose one of these pistols; we will load it, and I will fire at you. You have nothing to fear, as you can ward off all blows."

I confess I was for a moment staggered; I sought a subterfuge and found none. All eyes were fixed upon me, and a reply was anxiously awaited.

The Marabout was triumphant.

Bou-Allem, being aware that my tricks were only the result of skill, was angry that his guest should be so pestered; hence he began reproaching the Marabout. I stopped him, however, for an idea had occurred to me which would save

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me from my dilemma, at least temporarily; then, addressing my adversary:

"You are aware," I said, with assurance, "that I require a talisman in order to be invulnerable, and, unfortunately, I have left mine at Algiers."

The Marabout began laughing with an incredulous air.

"Still," I continued, "I can, by remaining six hours at prayers, do without the talisman, and defy your weapon. To-morrow morning, at eight o'clock, I will allow you to fire at me in the presence of these Arabs, who were witnesses of your challenge."

Bou-Allem, astonished at such a promise, asked me once again if this offer were serious, and if he should invite the company for the appointed hour. On my affirmative, they agreed to meet before the stone bench in the market place.

I did not spend my night at prayers, as may be supposed, but I employed about two hours in insuring my invulnerability; then, satisfied with the result, I slept soundly, for I was terribly tired.

By eight the next morning we had breakfasted, our horses were saddled, and our escort was awaiting the signal for our departure, which would take place after the famous experiment.

None of the guests were absent, and, indeed, a great number of Arabs came in to swell the crowd.

The pistols were handed me; I called attention to the fact that the vents were clear, and the Marabout put in a fair charge of powder and drove the wad home. Among the bullets produced, I chose one which I openly put in the pistol, and which was then also covered with paper.

The Arab watched all these movements, for his honor was at stake.

We went through the same process with the second pistol and the solemn moment arrived.

Solemn, indeed, it seemed to everybody—to the spectators who were uncertain of the issue, to Madame Houdin, who had in vain besought me to give up this trick, for she feared the result—and solemn also to me, for as my new

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trick did not depend on any of the arrangements made at Algiers, I feared an error, an act of treachery—I knew not what.

Still I posted myself at fifteen paces from the sheik, without evincing the slightest emotion.

The Marabout immediately seized one of the pistols, and, on my giving the signal, took a deliberate aim at me. The pistol went off, and the ball appeared between my teeth.

More angry than ever, my rival tried to seize the other pistol, but I succeeded in reaching it before him.

"You could not injure me," I said to him, "but you shall now see that my aim is more dangerous than yours. Look at that wall."

I pulled the trigger, and on the newly whitewashed wall appeared a large patch of blood, exactly at the spot where I had aimed.

The Marabout went up to it, dipped his finger in the blood, and, raising it to his mouth, convinced himself of the reality. When he acquired this certainty, his arms fell, and his head was bowed on his chest, as if he were annihilated.

It was evident that for the moment he doubted everything, even the Prophet.

The spectators raised their eyes to heaven, muttered prayers, and regarded me with a species of terror.

This scene was a triumphant termination to my performance. I therefore retired, leaving the audience under the impression I had produced. We took leave of Bou-Allem and his son, and set off at a gallop.

The trick I have just described, though so curious, is easily prepared. I will give a description of it, while explaining the trouble it took me.

As soon as I was alone in my room, I took out of my pistol case—without which I never travel—a bullet mold.

I took a card, bent up the four edges, and thus made a sort of trough, in which I placed a piece of wax taken from one of the candles. When it was melted, I mixed with it

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a little lampblack I had obtained by putting the blade of a knife over the candle, and then ran this composition in the bullet mold.

Had I allowed the liquid to get quite cold, the ball would have been full and solid; but in about ten seconds I turned the mold over, and the portions of the wax not yet set ran out, leaving a hollow ball in the mold. This operation is the same as that used in making tapers, the thickness of the outside depending on the time the liquid has been left in the mold.

I wanted a second ball, which I made rather more solid than the other; and this I filled with blood, and covered the orifice with a lump of wax. An Irishman had once taught me the way to draw blood from the thumb without feeling any pain, and I employed it on this occasion to fill my bullet.

Bullets thus prepared bear an extraordinary resemblance to lead, and are easily mistaken for that metal when seen at a short distance off.

With this explanation, the trick will be easily understood. After showing the leaden bullet to the spectators, I changed it for my hollow ball, and openly put the latter into the pistol. By pressing the wad tightly down, the wax broke into small pieces, and could not touch me at the distance I stood.

At the moment the pistol was fired, I opened my mouth to display the lead bullet I held between my teeth, while the other pistol contained the bullet filled with blood, which bursting against the wall, left its imprint, though the wax had flown to atoms.

It is no wonder that after such exhibitions Robert-Houdin's success was complete. The Arabs lost all confidence in Marabout "miracles," and thus a dangerous smoldering flame of disaffection to the French was entirely smothered.—EDITOR.

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David P. Abbott

*Fraudulent Spiritualism Unveiled**

THE METHODS OF A "DOCTOR OF THE OCCULT"

NOT so very long ago I met a friend—a man of wealth, who was a firm believer in spiritualism, and who frequently conversed with his dead wife and daughter. I asked him if he could inform me whether or not there were any good mediums in the city, as I should like to consult one.

He replied that at present there were none in Omaha of any well-developed psychic powers; that he was entirely satisfied on the subject and did not require any demonstrations to convince himself of the truths of spiritual science. He informed me that the question was settled beyond all dispute; but that if I were skeptical, there was said to be a medium in Council Bluffs who possessed most wonderful powers.

I accordingly made other inquiries from those who were in a position to know; and I learned that this medium, a celebrated "Doctor of the Occult, Astrologer, Palmist and

*As to whether communication with the departed is possible, no discussion is here attempted. The episodes following, from experiences well authenticated, merely illustrate what sleight-of-hand experts have long known—that most "mediums," "astrologers," "mind readers," and the like, can be proven to be frauds. Their dupes are puzzled, and sometimes won over, in the name of Spiritualism, either by the tricks familiar to all "conjurers," or else by the psychology of deception (see page 280). Some of the cleverness displayed is marvelous, as the following pages show. The passages by Hereward Carrington are copyrighted by Herbert B. Turner & Co., 1907, and those by David P. Abbott are copyrighted by the Open Court Publishing Company, 1907.—EDITOR.

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Spirit Medium," was at that time giving private sittings in Council Bluffs to earnest inquirers only, for the small sum of two dollars.

I was informed that his performances were of the most wonderful nature; that there was no possibility of trickery of any kind; that he told you whatever you desired to know, without your even asking him; that, in addition to this, he had powers over the elements of nature; and, in fact, I was led to believe that he was a true sorcerer of the olden days.

I determined at once to call on this renowned personage, and try to secure a little information from the unseen world. Accordingly, one Sunday afternoon I took the car that crossed the river, and in due time arrived at the apartments of this wonderful doctor.

I was met at the door by an attendant, who accepted the fee and directed me to enter the rooms of this mysterious person quietly; and if I found him employed, by no means to disturb him, but merely to await his pleasure; that he was frequently conversing with unseen beings, or deep in some astrological computation, and at such times it was not safe to disturb him.

With a beating heart I entered the room where he was to be found. This room was a large one. I did not see him at first. What attracted my attention was a large map or painting on a piece of canvas which hung on a wall space in the room. This painting had a representation of the sun in its center. This could be discovered by the rays which radiated from it in all directions. Around this sun were many stars, and an occasional planet, among which Saturn and its rings were very prominently depicted. There were numerous pictures of animals and men, and of queer monsters, scattered among the stars.

Beneath this picture stood a large golden oak table at which sat this delver into the occult, deeply engrossed in a study of this painting; while with a little brush he figured and calculated, in a queer sort of Chinese characters, which he drew on a sheet of paper. He also seemed to be making a strange drawing on the same paper. He was far too

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deeply engaged to notice my entrance, and continued at his labors for some time, while I stood quietly and watched him. Sitting on one end of this rather large table was a glass globe or vessel, supported by three nickeled rods, something like a tripod. Coming from the wall was a rather large nickeled tube or pipe which curved over above the glass vessel, and continually allowed drops of water to fall into the globe. From the side of this glass vessel there led a small nickeled pipe which evidently carried away the waste water.

Occasionally a little blue flame would appear on the surface of this water, play about, and disappear. When this happened the body of the medium was always convulsed slightly.

After a time he seemed to finish his calculation, and this seer condescended to leave the realms of the stars wherein dwelt the spirits that rule the universe and the destinies of men, and to descend to earth and for a time direct his gaze toward this humble mortal. He turned around and observed me for the first time. He was a large, portly, fine-looking gentleman of middle age, with very long black hair which gave him a strange appearance. He wore a pair of glasses low down on his nose; and from over these he condescended to direct his gaze at, and to study me for a moment as a naturalist might study some specimen that happened temporarily to attract his notice.

He soon informed me that the stars had told him something of my coming and of the question that was worrying me; and he asked me if I desired to consult the stars as to my destiny, to have him decipher it from the lines of my palm, or whether I should prefer to converse with the dead. The last was my choice.

Not far from a window at one side of the room there was a small table on which were a few articles. He directed me to be seated at this table, and handed me a slip of paper of a size of probably four by five inches. He directed me to write the question I desired answered on this paper, and when through to fold the paper in halves three

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times with the writing inside. I did so while he walked to his bowl of water apparently paying no attention to me, and then returned.

When he had returned to a position opposite me at the table, he reached to take my writing out of my hand; seeing which I quickly bent down one corner of the paper and gave it to him. He directed one sharp glance at me as I did this, at the same time picking up an envelope from the table with his other hand. He held this envelope open flap side toward me, and slowly inserted my paper into it. As he did this, looking sharply at me, he remarked, "I am no sleight-of-hand performer. You see your question is actually in the envelope." This was the case; for it was close to me and I could plainly see the top of it against the back of the envelope, the lower portions being inserted; and I could see the little corner folded down, as I had bent it, and I was certain he had not exchanged it. In fact he took occasion to use his hands in such manner that I could see there was nothing concealed about them, that he "palmed" nothing, and that he made no exchange. I was entirely satisfied that all was fair, and that no exchange had been made.

Next, he sealed the envelope, and holding it toward the window, called my attention to the fact that as the envelope was partly transparent I could see my paper within it and that it was actually there. This was really the case. He now took a match, and lighting it applied the flame to this identical envelope without its leaving my sight; and proceeded to burn the last vestige of it and the paper within it, allowing the ashes to drop into a small vessel on the table.

There was no doubt that he did not exchange envelopes and that he burned it before my very eyes. He now took the ashes and emptied them into the bowl of water on the side table. A little blue flame appeared on the surface of the water after that for a moment, and then disappeared.

He now brought from a drawer a number of slates—about eight or ten small slates with padded edges. They

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were the smallest size of slates, I should judge; and with them he brought another slate, a trifle larger, probably two inches both longer and wider. He requested me to examine thoroughly or to clean them all to my own satisfaction, and to stack the small ones on the table, one on top of the other; and when all were thus placed, to place the large slate on top of the stack.

While I was doing this he called to his attendant for a drink of water, and incidentally stepped into the hall to receive it, so that his menial would not profane this sanctuary with his presence.

Returning to the table he took a seat opposite me and placed one of my hands and one of his on top of the slates. In due time he took up the slates and we found nothing. He replaced them, and waited for a few moments; then seeming dissatisfied with conditions, he took up the top slate in his left hand and with his right hand began writing a message for me. He did this like mediums do automatic writing, with eyes half closed; and while writing his person was convulsed a few times. He then opened his eyes and read aloud what he had written, asking me if it answered my question. I replied that it did not, as it was entirely foreign to the subject. Then seeming dissatisfied, he moistened his fingers, erased the writing, and replaced the top slate on the stack of slates.

He now placed his hands on this slate again, and after a time examined it; but it was still free from writing. He lifted up some of the other slates; but as there was no writing, he scattered the slates around on the table and asked me to spread a large cloth over them which he handed to me. This I did, and under his direction placed my arms and hands over this. He walked to the bowl of water on the side table, and gazed into it. I watched him; and I saw a rather large flame appear on the surface of the water, dance about, and disappear.

He immediately informed me that he was certain that I now had a message. He remained at a distance while I examined the slates one by one. Finally, on one of them

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I found a message, neatly written and covering the entire slate. It read:

"Mrs. Piper is a genuine medium. She possesses powers of a very unusual nature. Her tests given Hyslop and others are genuine. Do not be a skeptic. You are making a mistake, dear friend. It is all plain to me now, and spirit is all there is.—WILL."

Now, the question I had written was addressed to a very dear friend who is now dead, and read as follows:

"WILL J——: In regard to the medium, Mrs. Piper, of whom we conversed on your last visit, I would ask if she be genuine, and if the tests she gave Professor Hyslop and others were genuine. Give me a test."

This was all nicely done, and I am sure would have greatly impressed nearly everyone. Being a performer myself, I could of course follow the performance in minute detail, and I am thus enabled to give to the readers of this paper a detailed account of the method used by the doctor. I will state that since that time I have very successfully operated this same test, minus the bowl of water and flame of fire; and that I can assure all that it is very practicable and that it is very deceptive.

HOW THE TRICKS SUCCEEDED

WHEN the medium picked up the envelope in which to place my paper, there was within it a duplicate piece of paper folded the same, and of the same size (one inch and a quarter by two inches) as the one I had folded. He kept the face of this envelope opposite me so I could not see that side of it. On the face of it was a horizontal slit cut with a knife. This slit was about two inches long and was situated about halfway down the face of the envelope. The duplicate folded paper was placed vertically in the envelope at its center, so that its center was located against the slit. This piece of paper was held in position by a touch of paste at a point opposite the slit,

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which caused it to adhere to the inside of the back of the envelope.

When he picked up this prepared envelope with his left hand, he did so with the slit side or face in his palm next to the fingers of his left hand. This envelope lay slit side down before he picked it up; so that I did not see the face of the envelope at all, and he kept that side of the envelope from me during the entire trick. The paper within the envelope had been placed far enough down so that its top part was not exposed to my view. The envelope thus appeared perfectly natural, as an ordinary one with nothing in it.

He thus held the envelope in his left hand, flap open wide, with the back side of the envelope later to be sealed, facing me. Now he really inserted my paper in this envelope with his right hand as he took it from me; but in fact, he pushed it down just behind the hidden slip of paper within the envelope. I mean that he inserted it between the concealed slip and the face or slit side of the envelope; and as he did this *he caused the lower end of my slip of paper to pass through the slit in the center of the front of the envelope.* The lower portion of my slip was thus out of the envelope on its rear side, between the front of the envelope and the fingers of his left hand; although I could see nothing of this. He pushed it down so that the top still remained in view with the bent corner exposed, and then sealed the flap over it.

Holding the envelope toward the window, he called to my notice the fact that my paper was within, and that I could see it plainly. I could see the shadow of the two papers, which appeared as one, and thus his statement seemed correct. Of course he did not show me the rear side *or face* of the envelope, with my paper protruding, which was immediately behind the duplicate, so that the shadow of it was also the shadow of the duplicate.

This shadow also hid from my view the shadow of the slit. The envelope was sealed fairly.

Now with his right hand he moved a small vessel on

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the table toward himself. Then taking the envelope in his right hand, slit side downward, he held it close to this vessel; *at the same time with his left hand he took a match from his pocket and proceeded to burn the envelope.* This move concealed the trick; and it was very deceiving and cleverly done. As he took the envelope from his left hand with his right hand, he, with his left fingers touching the protruding portion of my slip, caused it to remain in his left hand and to be drawn entirely out of the slit. His eyes followed the envelope as his right hand took it; which naturally caused my eyes to follow it, as his attention seemed centered on the envelope and it appeared to occupy the stage of action. This move was executed in a moment, not requiring any time worth mentioning, although it takes so long to describe it on paper intelligibly. Now while his eyes (and of course mine) followed the envelope, *without pause his left hand went into his left pocket in a natural manner to get the match.* He, of course, left my slip in his pocket with his surplus matches; and when he retired for the drink of water, he read my question.

As to the slate trick, all was fair until he picked up the top slate, wrote an automatic message, apparently read it aloud to me, and then upon my informing him that the message did not answer my question, he seemed dissatisfied, apparently erased the message, and replaced the large slate on top of the stack of slates. What he really did was to pick up the large top slate, bottom side toward himself, *and at the same time to carry with it a small slate pressed tightly against its under side.* He held the large slate with its under side tilted from me, so I could not see this small slate. There being so many small slates in the stack, the temporary absence of one from the stack attracted no notice.

He kept this small slate next to him out of my view, and really wrote the message *on the small slate which was next to him, and which was concealed from my view by the larger slate.* He did not read aloud what he had actually written, but merely pretended to do so, repeating something entirely foreign to the subject instead. What he had

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written really answered my question fully. When he appeared to erase the message, his movements were but a pretense; and he did not erase it at all. When he replaced the large slate on the stack of slates, he, of course, replaced the small one which was concealed under it, *message side down.*

It must be remembered that the operator, at the beginning of the slate trick, first took up and examined the large slate a time or so for a message; and finding none, seemed disappointed, and finally wrote the automatic message; then on being informed that it did not apply to the case, he seemed dissatisfied and appeared to erase it.

After the message was written and the slates replaced, he examined the top slate a time or so, and even lifted off a few small slates looking for writing, but did not turn them over; then seeing nothing, he scattered the slates around on the table, leaving their same sides downward; and handing me the cover, he requested me to cover them and place my hands on them.

The trick was now practically done. As the slates had been examined so many times and nothing found on them, *even after the automatic writing*, the majority of persons would testify that there was positively nothing on the slates when the medium left the table. The majority of persons would never remember that he at one time wrote on the large slate and erased it. The message being on a small slate, and these being spread around, few would have known that this message really appeared on the particular small slate that was originally next the top of the stack.

Most people would have certified that they cleaned all of the slates themselves, that the medium never touched any of the small ones, and that he only laid his hands on top of the stack a few times. Some would even forget that the medium handled their writing at all before burning it.

I am sure that the nickeled tube that carried the dripping water into the space over the glass bowl, had a second tube within it; through which his assistant from the adjoining room either blew, or sent by some mechanism, the chemicals

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(probably potassium) that would take fire and burn on striking the water.

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When I perform the slate trick described above, after writing the "automatic" message, apparently erasing it, and replacing the slates, I do not scatter the slates around on the table as this medium did. Instead, I proceed as I will now describe.

We place our palms on the stack, and after a time examine the large slate for a message, but find none. I may incidentally remark that this last examination unconsciously verifies in the sitter's mind the fact that I actually erased what I wrote "automatically."

I now look on some of the smaller slates for a message, but find none. When I do this I do not turn these slates over and look on their under sides, but merely take off the top slate to see if there be a message *on the upper surface of the one under it.* I merely remark, "Well, there is nothing on that slate," indicating the second one from the top; and at the same time I drop the top slate (now in my hand) on the table beside the stack. I immediately take off the second slate and repeat this same performance, dropping it on top of the first one. I keep on with this performance until I have removed four or five of the slates, and have them stacked in a second stack beside the first one. Then seeming to grow discouraged, I remark, "I guess there is no message"; and I replace the second stack on the first stack. This places the message slate four or five slates down in the stack; as the bottom slate of the second stack, being the top slate of the original stack, is now the message slate.

I next up-edge the small slates and place a rubber band around them placing them in the sitter's lap. I, of course, place what was the top of the stack downward when I do so. As the stack is on the side edges of the slates when I first up-edge them, I next bring them upon the end edges, while I put the band in place. It is now easy to place the stack of slates upon the sitter's lap with the top slate down

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and to attract no notice to this fact. This is because the position has been changed a time or so in placing the band on; and I then take the stack in my hands by the edges of the slates, and simply place what was the top side of the stack in the beginning, at the bottom.

In due time I tell the subject to make an examination for a message, and of course four or five slates down he finds a message on *the upper surface* of one of the slates.

This seems very miraculous, as the slates have been so repeatedly examined and nothing found. Finding the message on the upper surface of a middle slate, where but a moment before there was nothing, seems to be truly a marvel. The subject having cleaned and stacked these slates himself, and having seen them examined so many times, naturally feels impressed that the message comes by some superhuman power.

THE NAME OF THE DEAD

In the book entitled *Psychics: Facts and Theories*, by Rev. Minot J. Savage, at page 15, the following account will be found:

"Soon I began to hear raps, apparently on the floor, and then in different parts of the room. On this, the lady remarked, simply: 'Evidently there is some one here who wishes to communicate with you. Let us go into the front parlor, where it will be quieter.' This we did, the raps following us, or rather beginning again as soon as we were seated. At her suggestion I then took pencil and paper (which I happened to have in my bag), and sat at one side of a marble-top table, while she sat at the other side in a rocker and some distance away. Then she said: 'As one way of getting at the matter, suppose you do this: You know what friends you have in the spirit world. Write now a list of names—any names you please, real or fictitious, only among them somewhere include the names of some friends in the spirit world who, you think,

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might like to communicate with you, if such a thing were possible.' I then began. I held a paper so that she could not possibly have seen what I wrote, even though she had not been so far away. I took special pains that no movement or facial expression should betray me. Meantime she sat quietly rocking and talking. As I wrote, perhaps at the eighth or tenth name, I began to write the name of a lady friend who had not been long dead. I had hardly written the first letter before there came three loud distinct raps. Then my hostess said, 'This friend of yours, of course, knows where she died. Write now a list of places, including in it the place of her death, and see if she will recognize it.' This I did, beginning with Vienna, and so on with any that occurred to me. Again I had hardly begun to write the real name, when once more came three raps. And so on, concerning other matters. I speak of these only as specimens.

"Now, I cannot say that in this particular case the raps were not caused by the toe joints of the lady. The thing that puzzles me in this theory, is as to how the toe joints happened to know the name of my friend, where she died, etc., which facts the lady herself did not know, and never had known."

It has been the writer's good fortune to witness practically this same experiment, performed by a very expert medium, Dr. Schlossenger, who was traveling over the country a few years ago.

I was residing at that time in Falls City, Neb., a place of a few thousand population. For two winters I had traveled some as a magician, so when the medium came to town, and began to perform his miracles, certain members of the community suggested having me witness one of his séances, thinking I would be able to discover whether his tests were genuine, or whether they were performd by the aid of trickery. Accordingly, one evening, a prominent physician invited me, with certain relatives and friends, to attend a séance given in his parlors.

When we arrived I was introduced to the medium, an

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elderly gentleman with a long white beard, and wearing glasses. He appeared to be slightly deaf, as he placed his hand to his ear and had my name repeated. He was introduced to the remainder of the company *en masse*, the names of the visitors not being given to him.

The medium soon announced that "his mission on this earth was to absolutely prove to humanity the immortality of the soul." He now offered to give some tests to those desiring it, and asked for a small table which was placed in an adjoining room. He invariably held his hand to his ear, to catch what was being said, being apparently quite deaf. He also used this same expedient when listening to the voices of the unseen spirits, and reporting their communications.

My father and another gentleman were selected for the first test, as they were considered very skeptical in such matters. As they retired to a closed room I did not see the experiment, but will give some parts of it as reported to me, farther on. In a short time they returned to the parlor, engaged in a discussion over the matter; and my father remarked, "I do not know how you got your information, but I feel certain it was not from my brother, or he would have given a certain point correctly." The medium then said, "If I will tell you where your father died, and the disease he died of, will you be convinced?" My father replied, "I suppose I will have to be, if you can do that."

They then retired, and the medium succeeded partially in the experiment; and would have certainly succeeded entirely, had my father followed his instructions. I will describe what was reported to me of this test, farther on.

I now offered myself for a test. I retired to the room with the medium, and incidentally offered him one dollar and fifty cents, the same my father had given him; but he refused the money, saying: "Your father is not convinced, and I will not take any more money."

He now took a sheet of paper from a tablet, and drew five straight lines across it, spacing the sheet into six spaces

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about equal. Next taking my hand, and looking earnestly into my face, he said: "Promise me that if I succeed, you will not make light of this. Promise me, for this is very sacred to me." I did so. He now directed me to write names in the spaces on the sheet, any names I pleased, writing but one name in each space. All the names were to be of living or fictitious persons except one, this one to be the name of some one I had known who was then dead. He said, "Be fair with me, and I will scratch out the dead person's name." These were his exact words, therefore I in no way tried to hide my writing from him, although he stood at a distance and did not appear to watch me. I took a pencil and began writing the names; being unprepared I had to think of the names I wished to write. I desired to select names of persons living at a distance, so that he could in no possible manner know them. While I was writing he talked incessantly, which in spite of myself divided my attention. At the same time he kept urging me to write, and immediately after urging me, would begin talking rapidly on some spiritualistic subject. I remember saying, "You must give me time to think." I thought I used great care, so as to write each name with the same precision, and tried to betray no emotion when writing the dead person's name. I selected the name "Cora Holt" for the dead person's name. This was the name of an aunt who had died in another State.

As soon as I had written the names he asked me to cut them apart into slips, having one name on each slip. Now here I do not remember whether he folded them himself, or had me help, as I was not expecting them to be folded. However, we folded each one into a billet with the writing inside.

He now directed me to place them in a hat, and to hold the hat under the table, take out the billets one at a time, and throw them on the table top. This I did while he stood with his right arm extended toward the table and about one foot above it. After I had thrown a few billets on the table, as I threw the next one, I heard three

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loud distinct raps. He said, "There, that's the one that is dead. Open it and see if I am right, but do not let me see it. Fold it up again and place it in your pocket." I opened the billet. I did not know what the name would be, as I had mixed them under the table; yet I had a feeling that it was correct. I opened it and sure enough the name was "Cora Holt." I refolded it, placing it in my pocket. I must confess that I felt a momentary creepy feeling pass over me, as my emotions were wrought up to such a pitch by the intense manner in which I had watched all the details of the experiment. I informed him that he was right, but did not tell him the name. He now took my hand in his, and leading me into the parlor, had me state to the company what had just occurred. Now placing his hand on my head, he said: "I will endeavor to give you the name." Closing his eyes, his body trembled or shuddered with a kind of paroxysm, and apparently with a great effort he pronounced the name "Cora Holt." This effort seemed to greatly exhaust him, and coming out of his temporary trance he begged us to excuse him, saying that there were opposing spirits present and he could do no more that night; that he had done all for us that lay within his power. He now took his leave.

This was all very impressive to me at the time, except the raps. It was only afterwards that I thought out the explanation, which I will give farther on. As to the raps, they had the sound as of a pencil tapping loudly on a thin strip of wood, or a ruler, and not the sound of tapping on a table. I had previously known of the mechanical and electrical rappers, supplied by certain conjuring depots, and worn on the person of the medium, or attached to a table. My impression was at the time that possibly he had a rapper in the sleeve of the arm extended over the table, and by directing the attention to the table the sound would appear to come from there. As I was sitting right against the table, I will say that the sound did not appear to me to come from the table, but more nearly from his person.

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Referring again to the test given my father, the medium first announced his prices, which he would accept if satisfactory. This was agreed to and paid. He then had my father write names on paper in a manner similar to the way I have described, except he did not request my father to write a dead person's name; instead, he requested him to write, among other names, his mother's maiden name, his wife's maiden name, his father's name, also the names of certain members of his family and of some of his friends, some of whom should be dead. This my father did.

Among the names written by my father was his mother's maiden name, viz., "Celestina Redexilana Phelps," a name certainly out of the ordinary. He also wrote his wife's maiden name, his father's name, his brother's name, and several other names—six or eight altogether.

When the medium had the billets taken out of the hat he said, "You have there the name of your mother; the name is something like 'Celestia (not Celestina) Roxalena (not Redexilana) Phelps,'" thus giving wrong pronunciations to the first two names. However, when my father opened it, sure enough it was his mother's maiden name. My father now took another billet which had written thereon his father's name. This the medium gave correctly, stating that this was his father's name. The next billet had written thereon the name of my father's brother; the name was James Asahel Abbott." The medium then said: "Your brother James is here, and he says to tell you that he is happy and that you are making a great mistake not to believe."

Now this brother had always been called by his second name and not by the name of James. My father said, "If you are my brother, give me your full name." The medium replied, "James Ash-a-bell Abbott," giving an entirely wrong pronunciation of the second name. This it was, with some other error, that led to the discussion they had on returning to the parlor, and in which my father remarked, "If you get your information from the dead, they should be able to pronounce their own names correctly."

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My father, not being familiar with the methods of trickery, could not with exactness give all the minute details of the test as I would have wished; and as I never had an opportunity to see this experiment myself, I can only surmise the means employed in its production.

The second experiment with my father had been an effort to tell the disease of which my grandfather died, also the place where he died. The medium required my father to write on the usual ruled paper, a name of a disease and also a name of a place, in each space, that is, one disease and one place in each space. He remarked in giving directions, "Like New York measles, Philadelphia smallpox, etc." He required, however, that my father write *in the same space* the correct disease, and also the correct place of his father's death. The remainder of the spaces were to contain the names of any disease or any place he might choose.

This my father did, writing in one space "Sacramento dysentery." This was the correct disease, but the city was the place of my grandfather's burial, and not the place of his death, the latter being a village called "Hangtown." The medium quickly gave dysentery as the disease, and Sacramento as the place of my grandfather's death. It was plain that had my father written the village where his father died, instead of his burial place, the medium would have succeeded.

This, however, proved beyond a doubt that the medium obtained his information *from the writing*, and not from the spirits of the dead.

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After thinking the matter over, I decided that, while I was uncertain as to the manner in which Dr. Schlossenger had performed all of these experiments, I could reproduce two of them with certainty as often as he did. I immediately made the trial and found I could succeed fully nine times out of ten on an average. I might state that the doctor also failed about one time in ten on an average; nevertheless, the people of the community were greatly ex-

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cited, talking of his miracles, in groups on the streets, for some days. The medium was coining money, yet I found a few cases where he failed totally. The failures were seldom mentioned; it was the successes that excited the people.

The method I use in reproducing the first test given me, is to so direct the attention of the subjects before the writing, by my discourse, as to cause them to select unconsciously the name of the dead person in advance. This is easily managed with a little practice in talking, and still they will never guess that it is done on purpose.

Now, as they begin to write, they will naturally pause before writing each name, to think of a name to write. The pause may be but slight, yet there is some pause. Of course, when they write the selected name, no pause will be necessary; and if hurried properly at that time they will make none. This is the object of the incessant talking during the experiment. If left to themselves, the subjects will, in about one half of the cases, write the selected name in the third space from the top. In about half of the remaining cases the selected name will be written in the fourth space from the top. This is especially true if in your instructions you direct the subject to "mix the dead person's name somewhere in among the others where you cannot know where it is." In the remaining cases the subjects are liable to write the selected name anywhere, generally first or last. Now my object is to so manipulate my subjects as to cause them to write the selected name when I want them to do so. This is done by continuous talking, and distracting their attention until the proper moment. I choose the third space, since this, being the one they are most liable to choose of their own accord, is the easiest to force. Just as they begin to write the first name, before they make a mark, I say suddenly, "Now be sure and select names of living persons that I could not possibly know." This is almost certain to insure a pause, and the name of a living person to be written first. I continue my talking in a natural manner, taking the attention

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to a great extent from the writing, and nearly always observing another pause just before writing the second name. When the second name is almost finished I exclaim suddenly, "Now write as rapidly as possible!" If the subjects have been properly impressed with the seriousness of the experiment, they will almost invariably, on finishing the second name (in obedience to my command "to be as rapid as possible," and in their desire to please me), hurry into the name already in their minds, thus writing the selected name in the third place. If such is the case they will now most surely pause to think of a fourth name. If so, I am certain that I now know the selected name. However, if they should rapidly pass into the fourth name, it is then uncertain whether the selected name is in the third or fourth space. This, however, seldom happens if worked in an expert manner.

In rare cases the subject cannot be manipulated by the performer, in which case it is purely guesswork; even in such cases, however, I stand one chance in six of succeeding; and if I make a second trial on failing (not uncommon with mediums), I stand one chance in three of succeeding.

It is hardly worth while to say that as I fold the billets, I fold the third one slightly different from the rest, so that while it will not attract attention, I can see at a glance what it is when thrown on the table. I memorize the name; also, if in doubt, I fold a second choice in a still different manner for a second trial. Frequently I memorize more of the names, folding so I can pick them out. Then, after giving the dead person's name with proper effect, I pick up the others, hold them to my head and call out the names. The effect of this on a subject is very impressive.

With a little practice the above test can be given with very small chance of failure; and in the event of making a failure it can be explained by the statement that "there are opposing spirits present," or some similar excuse. If one has other tests at his command, it is well, in the event of failure, to announce that he will try something else, and

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then give another test. As these experiments are always tried alone with one or, at most, two subjects, a failure attracts little notice.

Now I cannot say positively that Dr. Schlossenger performed this experiment in exactly this same manner; but I do have a recollection of his hurrying me along in my writing at some stage of its progress. I also know that I can succeed as often as he did. I will add further that a few days later I prepared six names in advance, and, with my wife, had a sitting with the medium; this time, although I paid him, he failed utterly. He tried in every way and had me write additional names. This time I guarded the points in the above explanation, yet no matter how he tried, he made an utter failure. All tricks require certain conditions, and this is why it is not safe to repeat the same trick for the same person. There is too much danger that the subject may notice the sameness of the *modus operandi.*

Referring to the second test which was given by the medium to my father, I will state that when the subjects are writing the cities and diseases, they will naturally pause after writing the city, to think of a disease to go with it. Of course, when writing the correct ones, which are already in mind, no pause will be necessary. Also advantage may be taken of the fact that a small per cent of persons die of smallpox or measles. If in giving the directions one says, "Write like this: 'Philadelphia smallpox, New York measles,'" and the subject writes smallpox or measles in the list, it is safe to eliminate that from the case. This is especially true if written in connection with some large city, the name of which occurs readily to the mind. It is safe also to eliminate Philadelphia or New York if these should be written, providing you mentioned these names in the directions, and that the test is not being given in their section of the country. A small per cent of the people of a country die in any two places of prominence. Yet these places will be written readily by most subjects if they are suggested, or at least other

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places of equal prominence will be written. If an unusual place or disease should be written, it is almost certain these are the ones.

It can readily be seen how expert one can become at this by continuous practice, such as a medium has many times a day; how one can learn to take advantage of every little point, and use it with telling effect on unsuspecting strangers, who do not know what is going to happen, or what to look for.

I have been told that Dr. Schlossenger had a very sharp eye, although wearing glasses; and that the glasses were probably to make the subject think it impossible for him to read writing when they were moved out of position and placed on the forehead, as they were during the tests. It has also been suggested that his poor hearing was feigned, to enable him to hear remarks made about himself in his presence. I have suspected that his memory had become trained to a high degree of accuracy, enabling him to give his tests with such marvelous success, as he did with nearly all wherever he went. That he does not use one set of principles only in his tricks, I am certain, but has many more at his command which he uses continually. However, I can only vaguely guess at them from having seen his tests but once.

Now, I do not say that this was the method employed by the lady with Rev. Savage, given in the account at the beginning of this chapter. But as the experiments are practically the same, it is safe to conclude that the methods used are the same, or nearly so. If the test were genuine in the case of the lady mentioned, it was probably genuine in the case of Dr. Schlossenger. On the other hand, if it were trickery in one case, it probably was in both.

MIND READING IN PUBLIC

NOT long ago I received a letter from an old-time friend, in which he urgently requested me to make a journey to

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his city. In bygone days he and I had spent many hours together, discussing the mysteries of existence, the hidden powers which nature manifests to us, and the origin and destiny of the human soul. My friend is a physician, and what is more, an earnest student; and he is also an investigator of that strange phenomenon in nature which manifests itself in organized beings subjectively, as thought, feeling and things spiritual.

Many times had we discussed the possibility and also the probability of an existence of the spiritual part of man after death. Many times had he reported to me cases of strange phenomena that tended to prove the indestructibility of spirit.

When I received this missive, it stated to me that the writer most earnestly desired my presence in his city, that I might assist in investigating a very strange and marvelous case of psychic phenomena. The case was that of a certain traveling spirit medium, who claimed the power to summon from the realms of the invisible the shades of our departed friends and loved ones. He gave most marvelous exhibitions to prove his strange and miraculous power. My friend stated that he thought he had at last found a person with at least some queer psychical gift, if not even possessing the power that he claimed. He had watched the exhibition most carefully, and had even served on a committee on the psychic's stage; and he could find no evidence of trickery of any kind. He was inclined to believe that this strange being really possessed the power of vision without the use of human eyes as he certainly read sealed missives, of which he could in no secret manner have obtained knowledge.

Accordingly, on Saturday evening, I journeyed to a city one hundred miles away to witness the work of this modern sorcerer. On my arrival I suggested to my friend a number of ways by which such things could be performed by trickery, but he informed me that none of my explanations seemed to elucidate this strange work. The secret did not consist in the use of odorless alcohol, for the rea-

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son that the medium never touched the sealed envelopes at all. In fact he was never nearer to them than ten feet. This also made it impossible for him to use the principle on which the trick is based, which is known to the profession as "Washington Irving Bishop's Sealed Letter Reading."

He informed me that sheets of paper or cards were passed to the spectators in the audience, and at the same time envelopes in which to seal their questions were furnished for them; that the spectators wrote questions as directed, many times signing their own names to them. He was certain that many persons folded their written questions before sealing them, and that the operator himself did not even collect the envelopes on many occasions. He informed me that the best evidence of the genuineness of the performance lay in the fact that the medium seemed to have no fixed conditions for his experiments; but seemed to perform them in a different manner on each occasion. The conditions were different in every case, yet he always read the questions with the most marvelous certainty.

I thought the matter over after this, but could in no way think of any plausible means of accomplishing his work by trickery. I finally decided to wait and see the performance first, and to figure afterwards on the method employed.

Accordingly, at eight o'clock that evening I was seated in the hall with my friend, and shortly afterwards the "Seer" made his appearance, taking his seat on the stage. He was a very slender personage, with long hair and a particularly ghostly look. He took his seat quietly on the stage. In a short time his manager appeared and made an opening address, which I will not repeat, and then asked some boy in the audience to pass cards around to the spectators on which they were to write questions. Envelopes were also distributed, in which to seal the cards. When the writing was finished, the manager asked any boy to take a hat which he held in his hand, and collect

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the sealed envelopes. After the boy, whom everyone knew to be a local resident, kindly volunteered for this service and executed it, a committee was invited to the stage to properly blindfold the medium. This was done in a satisfactory manner, and the committee then returned to the audience. The manager now led the blindfolded medium to the rear of the stage, where he was seated somewhat behind a table, on which were some flowers, a music box, etc. However, the medium was in view plainly; and he never removed the bandage from his eyes or in any manner molested it.

When the boy came on the stage directly from the front with the hat full of sealed envelopes, the manager placed a handkerchief over the hat and asked the boy to take a seat near the front of the stage facing the audience. He was also directed to hold the hat in his lap, and to deliver the envelopes to the manager, one at a time, as he should call for them.

The operator now delivered a lecture, lasting some ten or fifteen minutes, explaining the strange powers of the blindfolded medium, who sat at the rear of the stage in full view; while the boy still maintained the seat at the front of the stage, and held the hat of envelopes in sight of all.

After the lecture, the manager requested the boy to give him one of the envelopes, which the boy did. The manager did not look toward it in any manner; but took it in the tips of his right fingers, held it in the air, and asked the medium to give the writer of this question a test. The medium shivered a few times, allowed his frame to convulse slightly, and thus began:

"I feel the influence of one who was a brother. I get the name of Clarence. Will the one who wrote this question identify it as his?" There was no response from the spectators, and the medium asked again that the writer speak out. Still silence greeted his request; when suddenly he pointed his bony finger into the crowd, while his blinded face confronted them, and exclaimed: "Mr. John

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H——, why do you not respond to your test?" A gentleman in the audience then acknowledged the test as his. The medium then continued: "Clarence was drowned. I sense the cold chilly water as it envelopes his form." At this the lady sitting with the gentleman began to cry. The medium continued: "The drowning was wholly an accident. There was no foul play. Now, Mr. H——, have I answered your question, and are you satisfied with your test?" The gentleman, a well-known citizen, acknowledged that he was perfectly satisfied.

The manager then laid the envelope on a small table and asked the boy for another one. The boy gave him another from the hat when the blindfolded medium, ten feet or more distant, gave the second test.

He shivered again and began: "I feel the influence of a young lady who died suddenly. She says, 'Sister Mary, I am very happy, and death was not so hard to endure. I want you to consult a good honorable attorney, and take his advice in the lawsuit you ask me about.'" The medium then continued, "Miss L——, your sister regards you with a look of great tenderness and love. Are you satisfied with your test?" A lady then replied that she certainly was entirely convinced.

The manager now laid this sealed envelope beside the other one and again called for another. This was continued until all of the envelopes in the hat were removed and the questions answered. None of the envelopes were opened. In some instances the medium first read the questions, word for word, before answering them; and when he did so, he described the writing minutely, even the formation of the strokes of the letters.

After all of these tests were given, the medium removed the blindfold and seemed much exhausted. Then the tables were removed to one side of the stage, and a cabinet erected; after which some cabinet manifestations that were very interesting were given. When these were over, the manager collected the sealed envelopes from the table, and placed them on the front of the stage, inviting the writers

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to call, should they so desire, and get their questions. Some availed themselves of this opportunity and tore open a number of the envelopes until they found their own questions. The audience seemed greatly impressed with this exhibition, and the next day it was the talk of the town.

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On the next evening I again repaired to the public hall to witness and, if possible, fathom this performance. This time, however, I found that an entirely different method was employed. Envelopes and slips of paper were distributed; and after the questions were written and sealed the manager went about the room, gathering them up in a small black bag with a drawstring around its top. As he gathered up each one, and while the writer still held it, he gave to that person a number which was to serve as that particular person's number during the tests. At the same time the manager marked the number on the subject's envelope, while the subject held it, drawing a circle around the figure, after which the subject dropped the envelope into the sack.

When all were collected, the operator took the sack in the tips of his fingers, and holding it aloft, walked up the runway to the stage where a cord hung from a screw-eye fastened in the ceiling above. The other end of the cord was attached to a piece of furniture on the stage. The manager now attached the black bag containing the envelopes to the end of this string, and then taking the other end, drew the bag up to the ceiling near the screw-eye, where it remained in full view during the tests.

While the manager was doing all this, the ghost-like medium had been walking about the stage, reading in a large Bible. He now laid the Bible on a table and advanced to the front of the stage, while the manager delivered a lecture on spiritual philosophy and also on the strange power of the medium. After this the manager announced that the medium would hold a Bible service, during which time he would give the tests.

The medium now took his Bible, and seating himself in

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a chair facing the audience, began by reading a verse. After this he closed his eyes for a time, and then gave the first test. He began: "I will give these tests in the order in which the manager gave you your numbers, commencing with number one. Now, Mrs. Clara S——, I see standing near you an elderly lady, somewhat stooped; but I cannot see her face plainly. She seems to be your mother. She says to tell you that your son is doing well where he is, and for you not to worry, for he will return to you in time. Are you satisfied?" A lady in the audience was visibly affected, and acknowledged that the medium had answered her question correctly. The medium read another verse in the Bible, after which he gave the second test in a manner similar to the way in which he had given the first one. After this he read another verse, and so continued until all the questions in the sack were answered. The manager now lowered the sack, and emptying the envelopes into a small basket distributed them unopened to their writers.

The effect of this exhibition was fully as great as was that of the former one, and the medium continued to be the wonder of the town.

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On the next evening I again attended the meeting. On this occasion questions were written and sealed as on the former occasions. This time the medium was dressed as a "Mahatma," wearing a large turban. As soon as the questions were written, the manager collected them in a small wicker basket, and emptied them on a table on the stage. He only talked for a moment, describing what the medium would do. During all this time the medium was seated near the front of the stage. The medium now tapped a little bell he held in his hand, as if summoning the spirits, and began giving the tests in the most marvelous manner. He seemed somewhat nervous, and finally arose and walked across the stage, stopped a moment and then continued his walk. Meanwhile he kept giving the tests. Occasionally he would walk about nervously, and

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sometimes he would seat himself in the chair for a time; but he kept right on giving test after test, with perfect accuracy, while the sealed envelopes remained in full view on the table. During this time, and in fact during the time the audience was writing the questions, neither the medium nor the manager had ever left the sight of the spectators for even an instant.

After all the tests were given, the medium, very much exhausted, fell on a couch on the stage; while the manager scooped the envelopes back into the basket, and then distributed them to their writers in an unopened condition.

I will now explain how this "occultist" gave these various billet tests.

We will first refer to the tests given the first evening. A boy from the audience gathered up the sealed envelopes in a hat, and brought them to the stage, sitting with them in his lap; while he delivered one at a time to the manager, who held it aloft, during which time the blindfolded medium in the rear gave the test.

There was a simple little move that escaped the eyes of the spectators in this instance. The spectators did not know what was to happen, neither did the boy. The move was executed as follows: Just as the boy came on the stage with the hat the manager received the hat in his right hand and in a natural manner. Nothing was thought of this, as there was nothing suspicious in the act. Meanwhile the manager directed the boy to take a chair that sat to the left of the front of the stage, and to place it to the right side in front, facing the audience, and to take his seat thereon. Now, this conversation with the boy naturally occupied the attention of the spectators; and while the boy was executing the directions the manager turned to the table, which was somewhat back on the stage, and apparently took a large handkerchief from it, and with the hat still apparently in his hand, he stepped to the boy, giving him the hat of envelopes and the handkerchief, at the same time instructing him how to cover the hat, and how to de-

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liver the envelopes one at a time. All of this maneuvering seemed so natural that the audience thought nothing whatever of it.

Now, as the manager turned to the table to get the handkerchief, and while most eyes were on the boy as he placed his chair and took his seat, the manager deftly exchanged the hat in his right hand for another hat just like it, that was filled with "dummy" envelopes and which was behind the flowers, music box, etc., on the table. As he immediately turned with the hat apparently still in his hand, but with a large handkerchief in his other hand, everything seemed natural and the audience thought nothing of the incident.

The manager now, after giving the boy the hat and handkerchief, invited a committee to come forward and blindfold the medium who had been seated at the left of the stage. The committee first placed a lady's glove on the eyes of the medium as an additional precaution, and then placed a handkerchief over this and tied it behind his head. This method of blindfolding is the one usually employed by most mediums. If the face of the medium be properly formed, he can easily shift such a bandage with his eyebrows, sufficiently to see directly under his eyes, by looking down alongside his nose. The committee now retired to the audience, and the performer led the medium to a seat behind the table.

Now, while the manager delivered the lengthy lecture, the medium quietly tilted over the hat of envelopes behind the objects on the table; and then taking one at a time, opened the envelopes and removed the cards, arranging the cards on top of each other like a pack of playing cards. The lecture lasted long enough for the medium to complete this task; and as he held the cards in his left hand, he could now move slightly to the right so that he was pretty well in view of the spectators. However, his left hand did not come into view.

By the time the lecture was completed, the spectators had entirely forgotten the fact that the manager ever re-

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ceived the hat from the boy at all. In fact, next day I noticed from the talk of the spectators, that they invariably asserted that the hat never left the boy's hands or their sight.

Now, while the manager held each envelope aloft, the medium had but to read the top card in his left hand and give the tests in a dramatic manner. After the tests, when the tables were set to one side and a cabinet erected, an assistant out of view received the cards from the medium's left hand; and then while behind the scenes, replaced them in envelopes, sealed them, and then exchanged these for the "dummy" envelopes on the small table. After the entertainment the manager placed the originals (now again sealed) near the front of the stage for the writers to take and keep as souvenirs if they should so desire.

It is evident that this method could be varied a little. For instance, when the manager holds the envelope aloft, the medium could first read it and carefully describe the writing. He could then ask for the envelope, so as to become *en rapport* with the writer, in order that he may give the correct answer. In this case he could leave the surplus cards on the back of the table behind the music box, and have in his left palm only the single card he is reading. When he receives the envelope he should place it in his left hand directly over the card and tear off the end of the envelope. He should then apparently take out the card from the envelope, but in reality take the original card from the rear of the envelope with his right hand. He should then with his right hand press this card on top of his head and give the answer, while his left hand lays the opened envelope on the table or music box. In this case, as soon as he answers the question, he should return the card to the manager with his right hand and ask the manager to have some boy run with it to its writer. After it is returned to its writer, the manager can hold aloft another envelope and the medium continue with the tests. After the tests, the manager should remove the torn envelopes, as they contain "dummy" cards.

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I will now explain the method pursued on the second evening. After the questions were written and sealed, the manager went among the spectators collecting the envelopes in a cloth bag. He first numbered the envelopes, at the same time instructing each spectator to remember his number, after which the envelopes were dropped into the bag. When all the envelopes were collected, the manager lifted the bag in the tips of his fingers and ascended to the stage with it in plain view. He quickly attached it to the cord and drew it up to the ceiling. So far all was fair; but just at this moment a person in the rear of the hall made the statement that he desired to place his envelope in the bag also. The performer asked a gentleman on the floor to take the bag, which he now lowered and detached, and to kindly go to the gentleman and get his envelope. While he was doing this the manager held the audience by his discourse. The two gentlemen were, of course, paid confederates; and when they met behind the spectators, they merely exchanged the first bag for a duplicate under the coat of the rear confederate, who then slipped around behind the stage with the original.

When the other confederate returned to the stage with the duplicate bag and handed it to the manager he ran this one up to the ceiling. This method can be varied by the manager making the exchange under his own coat in the first place when in the rear of the hall after collecting the envelopes.

Meanwhile an assistant behind the scenes opened and copied the questions neatly on a sheet of paper, and *numbered each one.* As he did this he slipped each one into a duplicate envelope, which was also numbered by the manager with a ring drawn around the figure. This he sealed. As soon as all were copied this assistant carefully drew the medium's Bible just out of sight from the table near the flies where it rested, inserted the sheet containing the copied questions, and pushed it back into view again.

During this time the medium was walking slowly about at the front of the stage while the manager delivered his

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lecture. At the close of the lecture the medium stepped back to the table where he had laid his Bible a short time before, picked it up and came forward taking a seat facing the audience. He next opened the Bible and turned the leaves over slowly, passing the sheet of paper and reading and memorizing the first question quickly. He then turned the leaves beyond this sheet of paper and finally selected a verse and began reading it impressively. As he read this verse he allowed the Bible to tilt forward sufficiently for the spectators to see that there was nothing like a loose sheet in it, should such an idea occur to anyone.

As he had turned over other pages after secretly reading the question, the sheet was hidden from view. After reading the verse he allowed the Bible to close, and then closing his eyes gave the test for number one. After this he again opened the Bible and turned the leaves through it slowly, read the second question secretly, and finally found a second verse, which he proceeded to read in a solemn tone. He then gave a second test, and so continued until all the tests were given. He then lay down very much exhausted, and the manager lowered the cloth bag containing the dummy envelopes, and emptied them upon a small table near the front of the stage. He then stepped to the rear of the stage and picked up a little wicker basket, into which he scooped the dummy envelopes from the small table where they lay in full view. He now descended and rapidly returned the unopened envelopes to their respective writers.

The basket is what is known as a "Billet changing basket." It is lined with red satin and is a small affair with straight sloping sides. It has a handle which, when down, locks two flaps up against the sides of the basket. This is done by two little projections on the base ends of the handle. They are of wire and are bent into such shape that they project downward when the handle is down, and hold the two side flaps up against the sides. These flaps are of pasteboard, and are covered with red satin the same as the basket lining. There is a spring in each flap which

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closes it upon the bottom of the basket when it is released by raising the handle. Envelopes in the bottom of the basket are thus hidden and retained, when the flaps are released, and the duplicates drop into the basket, from the sides where they were concealed by the flaps.

This basket can be supplied by the conjuring depots, or it can easily be made. The handle can be made of wire and wrapped with raffia grass which is on sale at the department stores. A pasteboard lining covered with red satin must first be sewed into the basket, and then two flaps of pasteboard should be hinged to a pasteboard bottom by pasting on a hinge of cloth. A suitable spring can be made of spring wire and sewed into position, after which this is all covered with red satin and placed in the basket. The basket should have sides about four inches high, and the bottom should measure about seven and one-half by ten inches. The sides and ends slope outward, and the basket is open wicker work. Suitable bows of ribbon on the ends of the handle and corners of the basket conceal the mechanism.

In the present instance, the assistant behind the scenes, after reading and placing the questions in duplicate envelopes which the manager had previously numbered, sealed them and placed them in the sides of the basket, bent up the flaps into position, and lowered the handle locking them in place. He now pushed this basket into view on a table at the rear of the stage; and when the manager was ready to return the envelopes, he scooped the dummy envelopes from the table (where they lay after the bag was emptied) into this basket. He then lifted the handle which released the flaps, covered up the dummy envelopes and dropped the originals into view. These he took down and quickly distributed to the writers. Being numbered, this could be quickly done.

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I will now describe the method employed on the third evening. This time dummy envelopes were placed in the sides of the basket, and the handle left in a lowered posi-

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tion while the operator gathered up the envelopes. As the manager returned to the stage he took the basket by the handle. This released the dummy envelopes, and covered up the originals retaining them. He emptied the dummy envelopes upon the small table and then laid the basket on a table near the flies in the rear, and rather out of view. An assistant behind the scenes took out the original envelopes, opened them, and as he read the questions repeated them into a small telephone. The wires from this telephone ran under the stage carpet to a pair of metal plates with a tack in the center of each plate which pointed upward. These plates were located under certain spots in the carpet and directly in front of the medium's chair. There were also two other pairs of wires leading to two other positions on the stage. The medium was dressed as a " Mahatma " on this evening, wearing a large turban. A large tassel dangled by his left ear, completely concealing a small " watch-case receiver " which was attached to this ear. Two tiny wires led from this receiver, inside his collar, down his person, and were connected inside his shoes to other wires which penetrated the soles of his shoes. These latter wires were soldered to copper plates which were tacked into position on his shoe soles. He now took his position in the chair and placed his feet over the hidden tacks, which now contacted his shoe plates, completing the circuit, so that anything whispered into the telephone on the stage was repeated in his ear. He then gave a few tests, tapping his spirit bell, which was a signal for more information from the assistant.

He soon grew nervous and walked away giving a test as he walked. He now paused in a certain position for a moment, placing his hand to his head as if somewhat dazed and tapping his bell. In this position his feet were again over two concealed tacks, and he again secured information for another test, which he gave as he walked about. He now paused in a third position and gave another test, after which he returned to the chair, continuing his work. This maneuvering he kept up until all the tests were given;

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after which he fell upon a couch exhausted, but with his feet from the spectators.

The manager now stepped to the rear of the stage and took the basket, which was now in place containing the original (?) envelopes behind the flaps; and stepping to the small table he scooped in the dummy envelopes; then taking the basket by the handles, he stepped down the runway and rapidly returned the unopened (?) envelopes to their writers. The assistant had, of course, sealed the questions in duplicate envelopes previously numbered by the manager. He had placed these behind the flaps, and shoved the basket into view on a table at the rear of the stage.

I use a variation of these tricks in my double parlors. I have made a "billet changing basket" as above described, and have also made a similar basket except that it contains no mechanism.

I pass cards and envelopes to the spectators in the front parlor. When the questions are written and sealed in the envelopes, I gather them up in the mechanical basket; I step to a table in the rear parlor and apparently empty them upon it. In reality, I have just raised the handle so that the originals are retained, and the dummy envelopes are emptied on the table instead.

I now step to an adjoining room for an instant, to get a small decorated screen. I secretly leave the basket containing the original envelopes in this room and return with the other basket in my hand in its place. I place the small ornamental screen on the table back of the envelopes, but leave the envelopes in view and request the spectators to notice that I do not go near them until I get ready to give the tests. I now carelessly lay the non-mechanical basket on a table in the room where the spectators are and proceed with some other tricks.

Usually I give the series of experiments described in the chapter entitled "Mediumistic Reading of Sealed Writings." I state to the spectators that I will not

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give the tests for the sealed envelopes until later in the evening.

Meanwhile, should anyone think of such a thing, he can easily examine the little basket, which he thinks I have just used; as it still lies on the table in the front parlor with other discarded paraphernalia, including slates, etc. I use no assistant; so after a time has elapsed, and when by the performance of other sealed readings, suspicion has been diverted from the tests with the billets, my wife retires on some trifling errand. While out, she opens the envelopes in the basket, prepares the sheet of questions, and places it in the Bible; then she re-seals the questions in envelopes previously marked by me, places them in the sides of the basket, raises the flaps and lowers the handle. She then usually enters with some light refreshments for the spectators, which explains her absence with a word.

I continue with other experiments for ten or fifteen minutes after her return; then I gather up my surplus paraphernalia, including the dummy basket, and carry all to the room adjoining the back parlor, where I leave it. I return instantly with the mechanical basket which I place near my own table; and then I give another experiment of some kind.

I now pick up the basket and announce that I have decided to return to their writers the envelopes on the table in front of the screen before attempting to give the tests. I do this as if it were a later notion. I now scoop in the dummy envelopes, and raise the handle, which action covers them up and releases the originals (now sealed). I now distribute to the writers their envelopes, which I can do, as they are numbered as described earlier in this chapter. I request each sitter to hold his envelope until I shall give his test. Then I usually perform some other little experiment before giving the tests.

I now take up my Bible, which I will stake I brought into the room, unnoticed, when I returned with the last basket. I then seat myself and leisurely turn the leaves

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through the Bible, reading verses, and giving the tests as before described.

I always first read a question secretly, and then turn by the sheet of paper and begin reading a verse of Scripture. As I do this I permit the front of the Bible to lower enough for the spectators to see the printed pages. This prevents suspicion. Meanwhile, the spectators have forgotten that I ever stepped from the room at all with the basket, and even that my wife retired for some refreshments. Neither did they notice the Bible when I brought it in.

The effect on each person, as I call him by name and describe the "influence" of his "dear one," giving names and most marvelous information, is far superior to what it would be were I merely to read the questions literally, and give the answers.

SOME FAMOUS EXPOSURES

PROBABLY the greatest swindle ever perpetrated in the name of spiritualism was recently brought to light in Stockton, California. The medium and his confederates materialized everything from frogs and small fish to a huge bowlder of gold quartz weighing several hundred pounds. This latter had to be brought from the mountains with a mule team.

The materializing was done through sliding panels in the walls, while the believers sat holding hands about the opposite side of a table, and loudly singing sacred hymns. They had the only door to the room locked and sealed, and never dreamed that the spirits who brought the quartz from the mine were mules.

Thousands of dollars were invested in this "spirit mine," the believers stacking their money on the quartz as it lay on the table at a dark séance, and receiving deeds in return for their money, which the spirits dematerialized.

The medium established, or had his spirits establish, a

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"Treasury of Heaven," for the faithful to deposit their money in, and on which they were to receive fifty per cent interest. This interest the believers continued to receive at dark séances from the spirits for a time. Each sitter's interest was found on the table stacked in front of him when the lights were lighted. When the spirit bank became insolvent and the chief medium disappeared, the believers were out about thirty-five thousand dollars.

No less a personage than a millionaire of Tacoma, Washington, is said to have contributed largely to this spirit fund. I had known of this case for some time before the exposure (conducted by a performer engaged for the purpose), and knew that certain interested persons were contemplating bringing it about, in order to rescue certain estimable persons from the clutches of these mediums. This was successful; and the confederates of the medium signed written confessions in the presence of one of the most devout of the believers, and a gentleman who is otherwise very intelligent. Upon this the gentleman was greatly crestfallen, but he still insists that there are certain mediums who are not impostors; and that certain mediums in Chicago who produce spirit portraits are genuine.

A full and very interesting account of this exposure is given in the *San Francisco Examiner* of March 3 and 4, 1907.

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I could report enough cases of materialization to fill a volume. These I know of, from various sources, and in every case they were invariably fraudulent. I will give a short account of a materialization which a very expert medium, who is on friendly terms with me, witnessed. The gentleman was originally a minister, and afterwards began investigating spiritualism, as he was a believer in it. He hoped to become a medium; and at one time paid two lady mediums of some renown, who reside in Chicago, three dollars a sitting for three sittings a week. These sittings were conducted for the purpose of developing this gentleman in mediumship. He continued this for a long time, but

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he was no nearer to being a medium than he was in the beginning.

At one time he detected one of the sisters passing a slate to the other, and substituting another in its place. He saw the edge of one of the slates protruding from behind the dress of one of the sisters. They never knew they were discovered as he said nothing, but this "opened his eyes." After this he investigated everywhere, and at every opportunity, and grew to be a very expert medium himself.

Recently, when in Los Angeles, he visited a séance conducted by a medium who claimed to be a Buddhist priest. This medium was known under the name of "The Reverend Swami Mazzininanda." He had an altar in his home, constructed something like those in Roman Catholic churches. He had various candles and images on this altar, including an image of Buddha, and also a number of mystical figures. It was a great mixture of "fake" Buddhism, Roman Catholicism, and modern spiritualism. The medium also wore the costume of a Buddhist priest at his séances.

This "priest" held services here for the faithful. He conducted all in Hindoostani (?), his native tongue. He chanted, prayed to Buddha, etc., all in a queer-sounding "gibberish." Certain evenings of the week were devoted to "soul-travel," and certain evenings after the religious services a "Black Chapter" was held.

The gentleman whom I have mentioned attended one of these dark séances. He sat with other spectators around the room in perfect darkness. The spectators were not required to hold hands, so great was their faith. Finally, in the darkness, a queer-looking, vapory, luminous form floated around in the air and paused in front of the spectators. My friend slipped down quietly on his knees, and gradually worked closer and closer to the luminous form, until he could detect that the vapor was a kind of luminous "cheese cloth." He did not desire to expose this "priest," but he desired to have the "priest" know that some one had discovered him. My friend accordingly took hold of the

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gauze and gave it a very slight downward jerk. He then immediately returned quietly to his seat.

There was an immediate pause in the discourse of the "priest," who had really been floating this form on the end of a stick. Everyone knew that something had happened, but no one but my friend knew what it was. The "priest" then said in his slow, peculiar, eccentric and measured tones, "I have received a very great shock; and I will be unable to continue further this evening." The next day, when in conversation with some of the "faithful," this "priest" stated in his peculiar manner of speaking, and with intense earnestness, that which follows: "Last night I received a very great shock. I was just in the middle of the 'Dark Chapter' and the spirit of the Master, Krishna, was out. Having spent the greater portion of my life on the Himalayas, my right eye has become injured by the snows." Then pointing to his right eye, he added, "My right eye has a defect in it which you cannot see; but on account of that, I can only see in the dark with it. I immediately turned my right eye downward and I looked! I distinctly saw a lady's hand reached out toward my robe in the darkness, and this hand took hold of it and jerked it lightly just like this." The "Reverend Swami" here illustrated, by slightly jerking his coat downward. It was very amusing to hear him, in great seriousness, relate this in his low and measured accents to his faithful followers.

Shortly after this, when the *Los Angeles Herald* was conducting a crusade against the numerous mediums of that city, and when it had an exhibit in its windows of the confiscated material of some of them, this "Buddhist priest" was arrested and imprisoned for some of his practices.

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Hereward Carrington

More Tricks of "Spiritualists"

"MATTER THROUGH MATTER"

THERE is one very clever "test" that is sometimes performed which would seem to show that something of this sort *is* accomplished. It is, however, nothing more than an ingenious trick, and this might be a good time to explain its *modus operandi*. The general effect of the illusion is this: The medium requests some one to assist him in an experiment in which he is going to attempt to pass "matter through matter." As the test is one in which a confederate might easily be employed, he is very careful to choose some person who is well known, or whose character is above all suspicion. If this were not so, the entire effect of the test would be lost upon the investigators. Having secured his assistant, he hands him, for examination, a solid steel ring, just large enough to slip on and off the hand and arm easily. The ring is perfectly solid, and may be examined by anyone desirous of doing so. When this part of the performance is finished, the medium and his sitter then join or clasp their right hands (as in handshaking), and the sitter is instructed not to release the hand for a single instant. To "make assurance doubly sure," however, the hands are fastened together in any way the sitters may desire; the hands being tied together with tape, *e. g.*, and the ends of this tape tied and the knots sealed. The tape connects the wrists and the hands of the medium and his sitter, and this tying may be made as secure as possible. A piece of thick cloth is now thrown over the two hands and the lower part of the arms, concealing them from view. With his disengaged hand the medium now takes the iron ring and passes it up under the

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cloth, so as to bring it in contact with his own arm. He holds it there for some time, but ultimately snatches off the covering cloth, and reveals to the eyes of the astonished audience the ring—now encircling his own arm—in spite of the fact that the ties are still *in statu quo*, and the sitter never let go his hold for an instant. The ties and the ring may again be examined, if desired, before the hands are separated.

This is an exceedingly effective test, and has every appearance of being genuine—indeed, it is hard to see where trickery can come in. The trick is one of the simplest imaginable, however, and is performed in the following manner:

The medium has provided himself with *two* rings exactly alike; one of these the audience is free to examine, the other the medium is wearing on his right arm, under his coat. When the two hands are clasped together, therefore, it is a simple thing for the medium, under cover of the enveloping cloth, to slip the duplicate ring down his sleeve, and on to his own hand, and that part of the "miracle" is accomplished! It remains only to explain what becomes of the first ring. The cloth thrown over the arms is very thick and stiff, as stated, and the inner side of this contains a double partition, or sort of bag, into which the medium slips the duplicate ring. The cloth may now be shown on both sides, without disclosing the ring, and the medium makes away with it as soon as possible, in order to avoid detection.

DECEPTION EXPLAINED BY THE SCIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY

THE object [of this passage] is to enable the reader to see, more easily, how it is that the watchful observer is deceived into believing that a thing is so, when in reality it is not, and *vice versa;* and also to give an idea of the various methods employed by the medium in order to accomplish his results.

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I must first of all call the reader's attention to one or two rules which every conjurer learns at the commencement of his study, and which he learns to apply so constantly that it becomes second nature to him. The first is: Never let the eyes rest on the hand that is performing the "sleight," but always on the other hand, or on some object on the table or elsewhere, as this will have a tendency to draw the eyes of the audience to that point also. The sitters or audience will always look at the point closely watched by the magician—their eyes have a tendency to follow his, and wherever he looks, there will the onlooker look also. Needless to say, the magician makes use of this fact, and many tricks and illusions are dependent upon it for their successful accomplishment. Whenever the magician or medium looks intently at one hand, therefore, the *other* hand should be watched, as it is a sure sign that *that* is the hand which is performing the trick.

Another fundamental rule that is observed by all sleight-of-hand performers is: Never to let an audience know beforehand what is to be done; *i. e.*, the nature of the trick that it is intended to perform. If the spectator knew what was forthcoming, he would be on the lookout for movements of the performer at certain critical times—just at the periods when close observation is least wanted—and would quite possibly detect the performer in the act of executing certain movements which would show how the trick was performed. But not knowing what is coming, the spectator is unable to watch closely at the critical moment—not knowing what that moment is—and so is unable to detect the trick, his attention being diverted by the performer, just before this movement is made, to some other object or movement.

The methods of diverting the spectator's attention are various. There is the use of the eyes, as before shown. Then there is the spoken word, the performer telling the onlookers to observe some certain object or action, and the effect is to cause them to watch it, as they are told. They follow the line of least resistance. The combined effect

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upon the spectator of the spoken word and the eyes together is generally irresistible.

Another important factor is this: A performer should always let any suggestion, right or wrong, soak well into the spectator's mind before attempting to change it. This is for two reasons. In the first place, if the suggestion is correct, if, *e. g.*, the performer really *does* place an object in his left hand, and it is shortly found to have vanished from that hand, he is annoyed by hearing some one say that he was not really sure it was there in the first place, as "it was covered up so quickly." If, on the other hand, the suggestion given was a false one, if, *e. g.*, the performer says he has placed an object in his left hand, when, in reality, he has not done so but has palmed it in the right, then it is still necessary to allow a certain time-interval to elapse between the performing of the action which apparently placed the object in the hand, and the showing of the hand empty, for this reason. If the hand into which the object is supposedly placed is *immediately* shown empty, the natural conclusion of the sitter is that the object was not in reality placed there at all, but was retained in the other hand, which would be the fact. If, however, the performer allowed some time to elapse, between the action of placing the object in that hand (supposedly) and the showing of the hand empty, he, meanwhile, keeping his eyes fixed on the hand, suggesting to the sitters that the object *is* there, and in every way acting as if it *were* there, the idea will gradually gain a firm hold on the minds of the spectators that the object is there, in reality, and they are correspondingly surprised to find it ultimately vanished. It is just such a knowledge of "the way people's minds work," as a friend once said to me, which enables the conjurer to deceive the public; and it is precisely the same cast of mind that the medium possesses. He is, in fact, a good judge of human nature.

Another fact that must be borne in mind is that, when once a spectator has seen a movement made two or three times in the same manner, he frequently "sees" the performer make that movement on another occasion, when the

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performer had, in reality, only *started* to make the movement, and suggested the rest. Thus, if the performer throws a ball up into the air two or three times in succession, and on the fourth occasion merely pretends to throw it up, really retaining it in the other hand, the great majority of the spectators will really "see" the ball ascend into the air on the fourth occasion, and will so state, on being asked. We here depend upon association and habit.[1]

Professor Jastrow summed up this portion of the psychology of deception very well when he said:[2]

"He (the conjurer) must dissociate the natural factors of his habits, actually attending to one thing while seemingly attending to another; at the same time his eyes and his gestures and his 'patter' misdirect the attention to what is apparently the essential field of operation, but really only a blind to distract attention away from the true scene of action. The conjurer directs your attention to what he does not do; he does not do what he pretends to do; and to what he actually does, he is careful neither to appear to direct his own attention nor to arouse yours."

Prof. Max Dessoir, in a very fine article on "The Psychology of Conjuring," writes as follows: "By awakening interest in some unimportant detail, the conjurer concentrates that attention on some false point, or negatively, diverts it from the main object, and we all know the senses of an inattentive person are pretty dull. . . . When causing the disappearance of some object, the conjurer counts one, two, three; the object must really disappear before three, not at three, because, the attention of the public being diverted to three, they do not notice what happens at one and two. . . . A specially successful method of diversion is founded on the human craze for imitation. . . . The conjurer counts on this in many cases. He always looks in the

[1] A very similar illusion is mentioned by Professor Hyslop, v. *Borderland of Psychical Research*, pp. 228–9, in which pellets were apparently placed in a box, really being palmed in the medium's hand.

[2] *Fact and Fable in Psychology*, pp. 124–5.

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direction where he wants the attention of the public, and does everything himself which he wants the public to do. . . . If the trick is in the left hand, the conjurer turns sharply to the person to his right, presuming correctly that the spectators will make the same movement, and will not notice what is going on in the left hand. . . . Every sharp, short remark will, for a moment, at least, divert the eyes from the hands and direct them to the mouth, according to the above-mentioned law of imitation."

The successful conjurer has carefully studied beforehand every movement that is made—every word that is spoken—during a conjuring performance, and has seen that these all fit naturally into place, and help conceal the real workings of the trick. The right and left hands must be trained to operate independently, and without the need of looking at either. Many conjurers practice doing two separate things at the same time, one with either hand; and the ability to do this is essential. Above all, the performer must be full of conscious self-possession, and feel himself to be master of the situation, no less than to feel the ability to cope with any emergencies that may arise.

Turning, now, to a consideration of the séance, we find that many of these psychological rules still hold good, and their operation enables the medium to perform many actions which would otherwise be impossible. A certain suggestion is given to the sitters, and imagination and inference do the rest. "Our conclusions as to what we see or hear are always founded on a combination of observation and inference; but in daily life it is seldom necessary to distinguish between the two elements, since, when the object and its mode of presentation are familiar, our inferences are generally correct. But it is different when, owing to circumstances, such as a bad light, we have to infer more in proportion to what we perceive than usual; or when some one, *e. g.*, a conjurer or a ventriloquist, is trying to deceive us by presenting one object under the familiar aspect of another, and suggesting false inferences. It is not uncommon to find people at séances encouraging

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each other in the belief that they see, say, a living human figure, when all that they actually *see* is something moving which is about the size of a human being; the rest is inference." How true these last remarks are is demonstrated by the statement, made in *The Revelations of a Spirit Medium*, that an old wire mask frequently used at materializing séances had been recognized "by dozens of persons as fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, cousins, sweethearts, wives, husbands, and various other relatives and friends. None but the medium knew that it was only a fifty-cent wire mask, hence none but the medium could enjoy the humor of the occasion."

One of the most instructive incidents I know, in relation to this question of the psychology of deception, is the one given by Doctor Hodgson [1]—the case of the officer and the Hindu juggler. In this case, a trick was performed before an English officer and his wife, and Doctor Hodgson happened to overhear this officer telling some travelers of the experience at dinner that evening. "Referring to the movements of the coins, he said that he had taken a coin from his own pocket and placed it on the ground himself, yet that this coin had indulged in the same freaks as the other coins. His wife ventured to suggest that the juggler had taken the coin and placed it on the ground, but the officer was emphatic in repeating his statement, and appealed to me for confirmation. He was, however, mistaken. I had watched the transaction with special curiosity, as I knew what was necessary for the performance of the trick. The officer had apparently intended to place the coin upon the ground himself, but as he was doing so, the juggler leaned slightly forward, dexterously and in a most unobtrusive manner received the coin from the fingers of the officer, as the latter was stooping down, and laid it close to the others. If the juggler had not thus taken the coin, but had allowed the officer himself to place it on the ground, the trick, as actually performed, would have been frustrated.

[1] *Proceedings Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. IV., pp. 385–6.

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"Now I think it highly improbable that the movement of the juggler entirely escaped the perception of the officer; highly improbable, that is to say, that the officer was absolutely unaware of the juggler's action at the moment of its happening; but I suppose that, although an impression was made on his consciousness, it was so slight as to be speedily effaced by the officer's *imagination* of himself as stooping and placing the coin upon the ground. The officer, I may say, had obtained no insight into the *modus operandi* of the trick, and his fundamental misrepresentation of the only patent occurrence that might have given him a clew to its performance debarred him completely from afterwards, on reflection, arriving at any explanation. Just similarly, many an honest witness may have described himself as having placed one slate upon another at a sitting with a medium, whereas it was the medium who did so, and who possibly effected at the same time one or two other operations altogether unnoticed by the witness."

In reading through descriptions of slate-writing séances, we very seldom find the statement made as to *who* placed the slates on the table, or under the table, etc., generally the account reading "the slates were then placed on the table," without any qualifying statement as to *who* placed them there. Accounts of this kind are absolutely worthless, from an evidential standpoint. We must at once ask ourselves: who placed the slates in that position? and if it was the medium—as it probably was in the vast majority of instances—then that test, in all probability, ceases to have any evidential weight. Anyone can read over a number of accounts of slate-writing performances, and verify these statements, if he chooses to do so. Frequently, the statement is made that the sitter did actually place the slate on the table, when in reality the medium did so. This error is quite unconscious on the sitter's part, of course, but the account is falsified, nevertheless. Mistakes of this kind are very common, the sitter thinking afterwards that he (the sitter) *must* have placed the slates on the table himself!

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It will be seen from the above that there is a great difference between what *actually* transpired, at any given séance, and what the accounts *say* transpired. The general public cannot get that all-important fact too strongly rooted in its mind: that the events which transpired at a séance may not be reported accurately, so that the report of the séance may be altogether wrong and erroneous, though the sitters, and those who drew up the report, may have been thoroughly honest in their belief that the report is accurate in every respect. The effect of all this is very great indeed. Many spiritualistic séances are quite inexplicable *as described*, but the description is not a true report of what took place at the séance in question. The facts are distorted. Consequently, the person taking it upon himself to explain what took place at the séance is called upon to explain a number of things which, in reality, never took place at all. We must remember, in this connection, that a number of conjuring tricks, *as described*, would be quite impossible to explain by any process of trickery. The description of the trick was not correct.

Let me make this still clearer, and at the same time illustrate the difference between what apparently occurs, and what actually happens, by the following example: A conjurer places a coin (say a quarter) in each hand, and closes his hands. Another quarter is now placed upon the fingers of each hand, so that there is now one quarter in each hand and one-quarter on the fingers of each. The magician announces that, by simply opening and closing his hands—which are held at some distance from each other—he will thereby transfer one of the coins from one hand to the other, so that there will be three coins in one of the hands, and only one left in the other.

Now, if the sitter were writing out an account of what happened, it would most certainly read as follows:

"The magician then tried the experiment—of opening and closing his hands rapidly, and causing the coin to be transferred, as promised—but failed in the attempt, the coins from the back of each hand falling on to the table

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in rather a clumsy manner. They were, however, again placed upon the backs of the magician's hands; the movement was repeated, and this time successfully. The coins disappeared from the backs of both hands, in one of which was now found three of the coins, while the other hand contained only one."

Such is precisely the description of the trick, as it would be given by the average person, on seeing it, and it would represent his honest opinion of what occurred; as it stands, it is quite inexplicable by trickery. Needless to say, the account is *not* a true statement of what actually occurred, as the following explanation will make clear:

The first time the coins were dropped on to the table, the movement was not so "clumsy" as might have been supposed. It was, in fact, intentional, being the principal factor in the accomplishment of the trick. What *actually* transpired at that time was this: The magician, by a quick movement, dropped both coins from *one* hand on to the table, at the same time dexterously opening the other hand a trifle, and allowing the second coin, on that hand, to fall into the interior of the hand itself. Thus, while both hands are still seen to be closed, one is empty, and the other contains two coins. It is obvious, therefore, that, when a coin is placed upon each of the hands again, the magician has only to repeat the opening and closing movement, and there will be three coins in one of the hands, and only one in the other.

This trick illustrates, in a very simple and striking manner, the possibility of reporting a fact in an entirely erroneous manner, quite unconscious of the fact that this error in reporting has been committed. Just in this same manner, are many slate-writing and other phenomena misreported, and hence an explanation of the séance, *as reported*, is rendered impossible. The trouble is that the "report" does not *really* report what actually occurred.

. . . . .

Many of my readers may feel somewhat insulted at this accusation that they cannot detect such obvious trickery

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when it exists, and that they are liable to make such mistakes in recording a séance as those here mentioned. They may comfort themselves with the thought, however, that it is no disgrace to make mistakes and errors of this kind; for, as Professor Jastrow pointed out:[1]

"The matter is in some aspects as much a technical acquisition as in the diagnosticating of a disease. It is not at all to the discredit of anyone's powers of observation or intellectual acumen to be deceived by the performances of a conjurer; and the same holds true of the professional part of mediumistic phenomena. Until this homely but salutary truth is impressed with all its importance upon all intending investigators, there is little hope of bringing about a proper attitude toward these and kindred phenomena."

These remarks will make it clear to us why many men of science have been deceived by very simple tricks and fraudulent devices, while investigating spiritualistic phenomena—their scientific culture is no guaranty that they are any more capable of detecting fraud than is the man-in-the-street—in fact their training has made them very much *less* capable of detecting fraud than the average person, who comes more in contact with the world, and is an acuter judge of character and human nature.

[1] *Fact and Fable in Psychology*, p. 148.

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Anonymous

How Spirits Materialize

From "The Revelations of a Spirit Medium"—a book out of existence now, since the plates and all copies were bought up by "spiritualists" and destroyed. The following is given by courtesy of Mr. Hereward Carrington:

READER, have you ever attended a "séance" for "full-form materialization?" Have you ever thought you had met your dead relative's spirit at these "séances"?

If you have never had the pleasure of attending a séance of this "phase" you have missed a rare treat. The writer has assisted at many a one and will relate to you some of the wonderful phenomena occurring at them and the means used to produce them. . . . There are hundreds of "materializing mediums" doing business in this country, who are swelling a good-sized bank account. Their business sometimes runs into the hundreds of dollars in a single week. This "phase" of mediumship is considered by the spiritualists as the highest possible attainable, and if you are a clever "full-form medium" your financial welfare is assured. . . . Many and various are the methods employed by the different "mediums" in producing this phase. It is in Boston, New York, and San Francisco that it is worked the finest. The full-form séances most often met with are very simply worked, and easy of performance by the medium. You are usually given a seat in a circle of chairs about the front of a "cabinet" made by hanging heavy curtains across the corner of the room. If you are a stranger or one who looks or acts as though he would "grab" the "spirits," you are seated at the farthest point from the cabinet; or, if there are two rows of seats, you will be given a seat in the back row. . . .

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I made my way to the "materializing séance," at which my friends hoped to materialize. I was admitted to the séance room and found about twenty persons already assembled. I was seated in the front row of chairs. The cabinet used was a closet about six feet long and four feet wide. The ceiling of both the room and the cabinet was of wood. After a thorough examination had been made of the cabinet by all those who cared to do so, the sitters were rearranged to suit the medium. There were present now thirty-five persons. The séance room was very large. The door had been taken off the closet that served as a cabinet, and in its stead were hung heavy curtains. The floor of the room was carpeted with a dark carpet, as was the cabinet. The light was furnished by a lamp placed in a box that was fastened to the wall some eight feet from the floor. This box had a sliding lid in front, controlled by a cord passing into the cabinet. By this means the "spirits" could regulate the light to suit themselves, without any movement on the part of any of those in the séance room being necessary. When everything was in readiness the medium entered the cabinet, seated himself and was tied, and so secured to his chair that it was impossible that he could have any use of himself. He was most thoroughly secured to his chair, and his chair nailed fast to the floor by passing leather straps over the rounds in the side and nailing the ends to the floor. After it was shown to the sitters that he was utterly helpless, the curtain was drawn. The manager now placed an ordinary kitchen table in front of the door of the cabinet, so that it stood away from it about two feet. The table contained no drawer. On the table was laid writing materials, a guitar, and small bell. The manager seated himself close to one side of the cabinet entrance, and started a large Swiss music box. Before it had finished the first air the lamp was shut entirely off, making the room inky dark.

An illuminated hand and arm was now seen to come from behind the curtain, and played an accompaniment to the music box on the guitar. We could see plainly the movements of the hand, arm, and fingers, as it manipulated the

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strings of the instrument. It did not appear necessary to finger the strings on the keyboard, although the air was in a key that made it impossible to tune the guitar so that an accompaniment could be performed *without* fingering. However, but one hand was visible, and it was picking the strings. After the tune was finished, the hand left the instrument, and moved out into the room to the front of the table, and from the sound we knew it was writing on the tablet that had been placed there. The arm was of bluish light and appeared to end just above the elbow, and to have no connection with the body. It finished writing and seemed to float into the cabinet near the top.

The light was opened and the manager requested those who had tied the medium to examine his condition and see if the ropes had been tampered with. The examination was made and it was evident that the fastenings were undisturbed. The communication was read aloud to those present, and contained the following:

"We are pleased to meet so many seekers after light and truth here this evening, and, from the conditions, as we sense them, we will have a satisfactory and pleasant séance. The way to obtain the best results is for each person to maintain a passive condition and take what we have to give. You may rest assured that our best efforts will be put forth to give you entire satisfaction. The Control."

The writing was exactly on the ruled lines although written in absolute darkness. The hand and arm, although luminous, did not give out a particle of light. The arm had been at least five feet from the cabinet opening and seven feet from the medium. Surely, it was not he. The message read, the light was again shut down and the music again started.

Once more a hand appeared, and floating out to the table, again began writing. Of a sudden the hand disappeared, and, after a few seconds, I was astonished to feel a hand thrusting a paper into my top coat pocket. Now appeared two hands and they played an air on the guitar. Now came three, then four hands were visible, bright as the day.

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Two of them began writing again, and, when they had finished, two more sitters were the recipients of sheets of paper. Soon the light was opened for an inspection of the cabinet, which was made, with the conclusion that the medium had not moved. Those of us receiving communications were afforded an opportunity to read them. We found them nicely written, as before, and all contained "tests." . . .

After the light went out again, more hands were seen; the table was floated about over the heads of the circle, as was the music box, which weighed at least fifty pounds. Another examination of the cabinet was made and everything found satisfactory. This time the light was not put entirely out, but a very dim light was allowed.

The music box was again set playing, and, while yet it was playing the first tune, a tall figure, robed in creamy white, with gleaming sparks in her hair, and on her head a sort of crown, issued from the cabinet. She was recognized by a gentleman present, a spiritualist, whose spirit guide she was, and who addressed her as "my queen." She stood a few seconds behind the table and then stepped out in the open space between the sitters and the table. The gentleman now arose from his seat and, standing beside her, holding her hand, conversed in a whisper with her for some seconds.

This was most assuredly a lady, if appearances go for anything. Her hands were quite small, and were warm and lifelike, as several, including myself, can testify, having been permitted to shake hands with her. At last she started to the cabinet, and, as she went, appeared to grow shorter, until, as she disappeared between the curtains, she was not much taller than the table. The manager now explained that the spirit had remained out rather too long and came near dematerializing before she reached the cabinet. Now came the spirit of a young man, dressed in a light suit of clothes, who gave his name and said his mother was present. She was, and had a few words of conversation with him when he disappeared into the cabinet. The lady said

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that it was unmistakably her son; but there was *something* that was not as he had been, but what it was she was unable to describe.

The next spirit to present itself was my son Eddie. He came out from the cabinet calling "Papa, papa." The manager asked "Who is your papa?" and he replied, "Mr. (Smith)." All this time he stood between the table and the cabinet, and only his head and shoulders could be seen. The manager told him to step out where he could be seen, when he came around to the front of the table.

It was rather dark, but I could swear it was my son. He was just the right size, with long flaxen hair and a very pale face. He wore a light-colored waist and darker knee-breeches and stockings, with a large black bow at his throat, just as I remember seeing him last in health.

While Eddie was still standing in front of the table a large man came out and took him by the hand. Eddie spoke, saying:

"Must I go back, grandpa?" The form turned toward me, saying:

"My son, this is a great pleasure to us, but we must not long remain, as it is our first attempt at materializing." He turned to go when the manager said to him:

"If the gentleman is your son you ought to give him your name."

"The name of the child is Eddie, and my own is J. A. Smith," replied the form, as they vanished into the cabinet.

The manager suggested that it would be well to examine and see whether the medium had been out or not. The cabinet was examined and everything found satisfactory.

Spirit after spirit came from the cabinet, one or two at a time for an hour; some of them came to friends, and others were "controls" of the medium. Many of them were recognized by different ones of the sitters in the room. I, for one, could swear to the identity of my own son Eddie, while my father was plainly recognizable. . . .

The room was again made dark. Suddenly there ap-

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peared on the floor, in front of the table, a light about as large as a baseball. It moved about in a circle of perhaps a foot in diameter and grew larger. It soon lost the shape of a ball and appeared to be a luminous cloud. Seemingly we could see into and through it. In the course of thirty seconds it had become as large as a six-year-old child; still there was no definite shape, only a fleecy cloudlike mass, turning, twisting, and rolling. At the end of perhaps a minute it was the size and shape of an adult person. The face could not be seen, but light, luminous spots were visible as though the hair and ears were decorated with gems. The shape spoke and requested light. As the light was turned on the luminousness disappeared, and we beheld a beautiful young lady clothed in a dazzling white costume. Her arms and shoulders were bare, and about her neck there was a necklace of what appeared to be very brilliant diamonds. Her feet were encased in white slippers, with straps across the instep. In her ears and hair glistened and shimmered beautiful diamonds. Her face and arms were as alabaster, and altogether she was one of the most beautiful women I had ever beheld. She was recognized by a lady and gentleman present as their daughter. They had met her here before. They were from the East, and were wealthy. The spirit requested that they come to her, which they did, and were each kissed and embraced by it. They held a moment's conversation with her and resumed their seats, when the lamp was slowly turned down. As the light became dim the spirit became luminous. The face and arms disappeared and the body became as a cloud again, turning and twisting and growing smaller until it was nothing but a small light spot on the carpet, which of a sudden disappeared entirely.

Immediately after this manifestation an examination of the medium and cabinet was made, and it was certain the medium had not been away from his chair. The light was again turned out and the music box started, when *two* bright spots appeared on the carpet, one at either end of the table. These went through the same process of development until,

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when the light was turned on, there was another beautiful female spirit at one end of the table, and a child of perhaps eight years of age at the other. The child was recognized by a lady present as her daughter, while the adult spirit was recognized and rapturously greeted by a gentleman who sat near me on my left, as his "darling angel guardian." They had quite a long conversation, in which they made use of very endearing language, each to the other. I supposed it was the gentleman's wife. . . .

The spirits did not disappear as the first one had, but, when the light had been turned off, the luminous shape revolved a few times, and on two occasions assumed the garb and shape of men, and when the light was turned on again, there stood the men with beards and men's forms. After some eight or ten of these materializations and dematerializations, before our eyes, the last couple completely disappeared.

The light was again turned down and a luminous shape came from the cabinet, followed by others, until seven of them stood on the floor. The light was turned up until we could see the seven spirits. Five were females and two males. They were of different sizes. The curtain at the door of the cabinet was pulled aside and *we could see the medium sitting in the chair in which he was bound.* The forms now filed into the cabinet again, while the music box played. After they had disappeared the light was turned up, an investigation made of the cabinet, and the séance was over.

There, reader, is a truthful description of what can be witnessed at the séances of mediums who are artists. None of your bungling, amateur work here. The work of such a medium is always satisfactory for the reason that if a man feels *sure* that the medium is a fraud, he has been so well entertained that he does not regret the money paid for the opportunity to witness it. This is the class of medium also who frequently succeed in getting large sums of money from wealthy persons they have converted to spiritualism.

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Did the writer not give you the true explanation of the manner in which these things were produced, you would probably say it was conceived by a very fertile imagination. If you believed that he saw these things you would perhaps offer the preacher's explanation, by saying, "it is the work of the devil"; or that of the scientist, by asserting that "it is the mesmerist's power over your mind"; or "the operator has discovered an odd force in nature"; or go off on a long dissertation on hypnotism and fourth dimension of space problems. However, it is not the work of the devil, neither are there any but *natural* laws necessary to its production.

The séance described actually occurred and was described in writing by Mr. Smith in the language used, although it was not printed, and the writer was one of those who assisted in its production. He will now proceed to explain this particular séance. . . .

It will be remembered that the room and cabinet were carpeted with a dark carpet, and that the ceilings were of wood. The ceilings were decorated by being put on in panels. The ceiling of the cabinet would not have been like that of the room had the closet been a part of the architect's plans of the house. It was not, but was made by the medium. He simply built a lath and plaster partition from the corner of a wide chimney to the wall, thus inclosing a space of six by four feet. The panel in the ceiling of the closet was twenty inches square. This panel was "doctored" and could be displaced, leaving an aperture large enough for the "spooks" to get through with perfect ease. A light ladder which reached within three feet of the floor of the cabinet was hooked fast above and furnished the means of getting down and up again. There were eight persons connected with the séance described by Mr. Smith, seven upstairs and the medium in the cabinet. Of course it was not necessary that the medium get out of his fastenings, and the facts are that he did *not*. The table was placed across the cabinet door, not to lay the instruments on, but to be very much in the way should anyone make a rush and "grab" for the materialized forms. In case this occurred, the

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" spooks " above would close the light, making the room perfectly dark, and the manager would do his utmost to turn the table on end, or side, with the legs out in the room. Before the " grabber " could get the lay of things and get past it, the spooks would have gone through the trap, closed it, pulled up the ladder, and the " grabber " would have found the medium writhing and groaning and bleeding from the mouth. The bleeding was for effect, and was caused by sucking very hard on his teeth or gums.

The table also served a convenient purpose in the materialization and dematerialization through the floor. You now know where the spooks came from, in this particular house, and how they got in and out. Now let us see how they managed the materializations, and the properties used to produce them. The trap and ladder were practically noiseless in their operations, but the music box made assurance doubly sure that the least sound from the cabinet should not be heard in the séance room.

When the box began its first air the trapdoor was opened and down the ladder came a young man clad in a suit of black tights. He was entirely covered with black with the exception of his right arm, which was bare to a point a little more than halfway from the elbow to his shoulder. The bare arm glowed with a luminous bluish light.

This condition of things was brought about by powdering his arm with pulverized luminous paint. If you are not told the method of transforming the sticky paint to powder, you will not be able to do it, and will conclude the writer was romancing in this case. The most essential thing to you will be to know where you can procure this paint. The writer has been unable to procure it anywhere, except of Devoe & Co., of New York City. It is put up in a package resembling six-ounce jelly glasses, and you will get six of them for five dollars. In order to reduce it to powder, thin the contents of one of the glasses with one pint of turpentine. When it is thoroughly cut and incorporated into the turpentine, soak strips of muslin in it and hang them out to dry. When thoroughly dry you can shake the powder from

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the cloth. In order to powder one of your arms, gather one of the cloths in your hands, and use it as a powder puff on your arm. You will not be able to get all the paint out, but the pieces will make luminous crowns, slippers, stars, and luminous decorations for your robes. You will be under the necessity of perfuming your robes each time they are used, for the odor of the turpentine will always remain to a greater or less degree. To illuminate a robe or costume (the mediums always say "robe") you proceed the same as in the powdering process, except that to the pint of paint you will add a wineglass full of Demar varnish, which will prevent its falling or being shaken off as powder. You are not to make the robe of muslin, but of white netting. Every lady will know what netting is. It is the lightest, thinnest material the writer ever saw sold in a dry goods store. Ten yards of it can be put into the vest pocket. Do not scrimp the material, but get as much of it into your robe as possible.

When he of the luminous arm steps from the cabinet into the dark room no part of him is visible save the arm. He picks the strings of the instrument with the illuminated hand and fingers the keyboard with the other. He makes a sound of writing on the tablet and tears off a leaf which he conceals, and, drawing a long black stocking over the luminous arm, places in the pocket of the sitter a communication that has been written upstairs in a good light. This accounts for the even, beautiful writing, supposed to have been done in the dark. He covers the luminous arm so that anyone so inclined could not locate it in order to "grab" when he is near enough. By mounting the table, that luminous hand and arm can be made to show as though it was floating about near the ceiling.

When four hands were visible there were two spooks at work with both arms illuminated. . . . You can readily understand the forces that floated the music box and table above the heads of the sitters, and an explanation is useless.

When the first female spirit appeared it was, in reality, a young woman, dressed in a gorgeous white costume with-

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out paint, hence the light was turned up instead of down, in order that she be visible. Rhinestones and Sumatra gems being cheap, she was plentifully supplied with "diamonds," although many of those who are the queens or spirit guides or "controls" of wealthy spiritualistic fanatics wear real diamonds, the gift of their wealthy charge, or "king" as they usually call him.

When she started for the cabinet she used her hands to keep her robe from under her feet, and as she went stooped lower and lower, until, as she disappeared in the cabinet, she went on her hands and knees. This is what caused the appearance of "dematerialization."

When Mr. Smith's son, Eddie, came from the cabinet, he was represented by a boy of about eight years of age, the son of one of the female "spooks" upstairs. He receives two dollars a night for his services, the same as the larger spooks. He was powdered until he was very white, a blond wig put over his own hair, and dressed as most boys are at the age Mr. Smith's son died. Mr. Smith recognized him by his size, his light complexion, and flaxen hair, and the fact that he called him "papa" and gave his correct name. His father was "made up" from the description given by the medium, and acknowledged by Mr. Smith as correct. Of course he knew his own name, for it was given him by the slate-writer. . . .

We now come to a part of the phenomena that all spiritualists who have witnessed it will swear by. What is referred to is the materializing and dematerializing of the spirit from the floor and before your eyes. In this you see first a small light, which grows larger and larger, until there stands before you a fully formed female or male spirit, as was described in Mr. Smith's experience.

In order to accomplish what he witnessed, the same spook who had before been recognized by a gentleman as "his queen," prepared herself in the following way: Divesting herself of all clothing she donned simply a long chemise that reached her shoe tops. She drew on a pair of white stockings, and over them a pair of white slippers. Into her hair

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and ears she put rhinestone diamonds, and around her neck a necklace of the same beautiful but valueless stones. On each ear lobe and around her neck were put small spots of the luminous powder to represent the diamonds while it was dark. Her face was powdered and her eyebrows and eyelashes darkened, while a dark line was drawn under each eye. She now took a black mask that covered her head, and her "robe" in her hands, and went down to the cabinet. Arriving there, she put the black mask over her head, to prevent the luminous diamonds being seen until the proper time. She carried her robe in a black bag. Crawling from between the curtains and under the table, she exposed on the floor a small part of her robe. This she shook and moved about, allowing it to escape from the bag until it was all out. She was now from under the table and on her knees, and it was time the head show on the form, so, getting close to the robe, she threw off and under the table the black mask. The shape was now the size of an adult; she adjusted the robe to her person, and rapped for light. As a matter of course, when any light was made the luminousness of the robe was drowned, and she appeared in simply a white costume. The necklace and eardrops could now be seen, but when the light was such as to reveal them, the luminous spots had disappeared, leaving the spectator to think the ones he now saw were the ones he had seen in the dark. The process of dematerialization will now be apparent, and a description will only tire the reader. One small spook was all that was required, as he could be made to represent boy or girl as was desired, by clothing him in the garments of either sex.

At the close of the séance, the full force of "spooks" came into the room. After disappearing, they shinned up the ladder, drew it after them, closed the panel and the trap in the floor above it, replaced the carpet and pushed over the place a heavy bedstead from which they took the castors. They now carried the ladder downstairs and concealed it in the coal house as they went through it on their way home. They will get their pay next day.

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Should ever so close an examination of the cabinet be made, you would not find anything wrong. This particular medium has taken investigators into the cellar beneath the cabinet, and the room above it, scores of times, yet nothing was discovered.

You are not always to search for the trap in the ceiling, nor yet in the floor. A trap is not possible in the ceiling except a closet is used as "cabinet," and the ceiling is of wood. Where this condition of things does not exist, you must search elsewhere. The floor is a very likely place when it cannot be made in the ceiling. If you do not find it there, examine the base or mopboard. If it is in the mopboard you will find, upon examination, that there is a joint in it near the corner of the cabinet, but you will find it solidly nailed with about four nails each side of the joint. This appearance of extraordinary solidity will be absolute proof that it is *not* solid.

The nails are not what they appear, but are only pieces about one half inch in length, and do not even go through the board. The piece is fastened on the other side with a couple of bolts that hold it very firmly in place. There is a corresponding opening in the mopboard in the next room, although no attempt is made to so carefully conceal it, as no one is ever admitted to it. Through this trap the "spooks" enter the cabinet by crawling and wiggling. It is not a very desirable trap, for the mopboard is scarcely ever wide enough to permit of a trap that the spook could get through in a hurry; besides, they must assume their costumes after they get into the cabinet or tear them to pieces. You can see how this would make it very inconvenient.

If the room is wainscoted the spook will have all the sea room necessary in his trap, for it will extend from just below the molding on the top of the wainscoting to the floor behind the strip of quarter-round. . . .

It is next to an impossibility to detect these traps by examining in the cabinet. They were constructed to avoid discovery, and no pains spared to make them so absolutely

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perfect that not one chance in a million is taken. The proper place to seek for traps is in the adjoining room, upstairs, or in the cellar. One is foolish to undertake to find a trap by thumping the walls or floor; for, if you happen to thump one, the medium who is smart enough to make use of a trap is also sharp enough to make provision for its being thumped, and your sounding method goes for naught.[1] Bear in mind that when you are examining the cabinet, you are seeking at the very place that is prepared most effectually to withstand your investigations. . . . Do not forget the *manager* in your search. He or she is never searched, or never has been up to date, which has been the cause of many a failure to find the "properties" of the medium when the séance was given in a room and cabinet furnished by a stranger and skeptic. Do not be deceived into a belief that all of the sitters are strangers to the medium. There may be from one to five persons present who pay their money the same as yourself, and who may appear to be the most skeptical of anyone in the room. They will generally be the recipients of some very elegant "tests," and weep copiously great grief-laden tears when they recognize the beloved features of some relative.

They are the most careful of investigators, and, when the medium's trap is located in the door-jamb, will pound the walls, and insist on the carpet being taken up, when they will get upon their hands and knees and make a most searching examination of the floor. They are the closest and most

[1] It must be remembered that it is occasionally possible for the medium to do away with traps altogether, either by having a confederate in the audience who produces all the phenomena—the medium sitting bound meanwhile—or by some such simple device as the following: Suppose the séance room is closed at one end by a pair of folding-doors; these doors are locked, the key kept by a member of the audience, while the keyhole is sealed, and strips of gummed paper are also stretched across the crack between the doors, sealing them firmly together. Confederates enter the room, in this case, by merely pushing *both* doors to one side, they being so constructed that this is possible. A small space is now left around the end of *one* door, through which the medium's confederate creeps!

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critical of investigators, but they are very careful to examine everywhere *except where the defect is located.* Because one or two men seem to be making such a critical investigation, do not allow that fact to prevent you making one on your own responsibility. Wait until they have finished and then examine not only where they did, but more particularly where they did *not.* Their examination is only for the purpose of misleading others. Their " tests " are received in a way to cause those about them to think they admit them very unwillingly, or because they were so undeniable that they could do nothing else.

A great many will probably deny that confederates are ever employed. They are not, by mediums who are not smooth enough to produce that which appears so wonderful as to make a good business for them. The writer would advise those mediums who give such rank séances to employ a few floor workers (they are easily obtained), and see what a difference it would make in the amount of business they will do. Get good ones, those who know human nature, and know when they have said all that is necessary. Most of them are inclined to say too much, thus causing the ordinary man to suspect that they are confederates.

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